TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

THE ULTIMATE COLLECTION, VOL. 2

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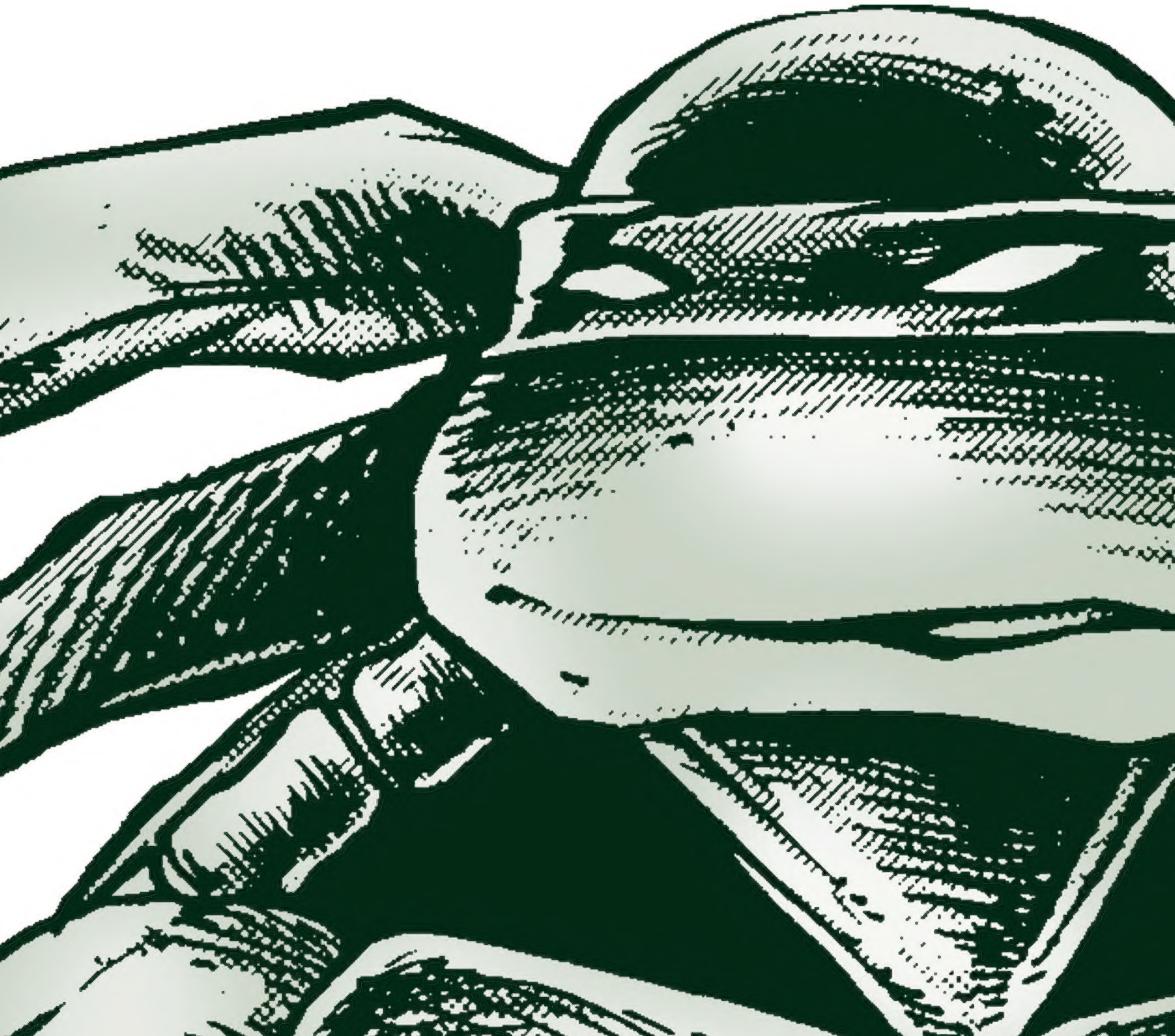

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Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles created by Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird.

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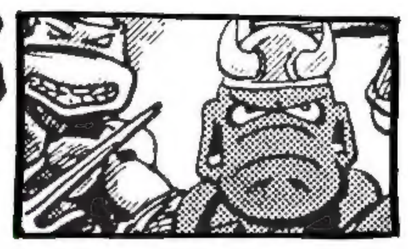
MICHAELANGELO ONE-ISSUE MICRO-SERIES

First Printing: December 1985
By Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird
The Christmas Aliens.

PAGE 38 

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES #8

First Printing: July 1986
By Kevin Eastman, Peter Laird, and Dave Sim
Team-up with Cerebus the Aardvark.

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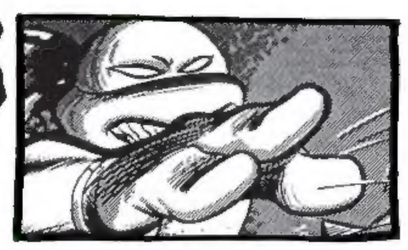
DONATELLO ONE-ISSUE MICRO-SERIES

First Printing: February 1986
By Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird
Kirby and the Warp Crystal.

PAGE 118 

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES #9

First Printing: September 1986
By Kevin Eastman, Peter Laird, Michael Dooney, Ryan Brown, and Jim Lawson
The Passing.

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LEONARDO ONE-ISSUE MICRO-SERIES

First Printing: December 1986
By Kevin Eastman, Peter Laird, Steve Bissette, Michael Dooney, and Ryan Brown
What Goes Around... Comes Around!

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TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES #10

First Printing: April 1987
By Kevin Eastman, Peter Laird, and Michael Dooney
Silent Partner.

PAGE 230

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES #11

First Printing: June 1987
By Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird
True Stories.

#1 IN A ONE ISSUE MICRO SERIES

MICHAELANGELO

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE

$1.50

$2.00 IN CANADA

MICHAELANGELO

SSNNIIIIFFF!!!

AHHH... THIS COLD AIR IS GREAT! SO CRISP AND CLEAR... AND THE SNOW IS SO BEAUTIFUL! IT MAKES EVERYTHING LOOK SO SOFT AND NEW!

YEP, THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THE BIG APPLE AT CHRISTMAS TIME!

DON'T KNOW WHY APRIL AND THE GUYS DIDN'T WANT TO JOIN ME, BUT I JUST COULDN'T STAY INSIDE ANY LONGER ON SUCH A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT...

EVEN IF IT MEANS WEARING THIS SCRATCHY SCARF AS A DISGUISE!

CO-CREATED WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY KEVIN EASTMAN AND PETER LAIRD

LETTERING STEVE LAVIGNE

MICHAELANGELO
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE IN
"THE CHRISTMAS ALIENS"

GEEZ, THAT REALLY LOOKS LIKE A BLAST! I WONDER IF APRIL COULD TEACH ME HOW TO SKATE?

I GUESS THE HARDEST PART WOULD BE FINDING SKATES THAT FIT!

HA, HAHA!

HEYYY... SLIDING!

NOW THAT'S SOMETHING I COULD HANDLE!

HI, GUYS...! THAT LOOKS GREAT! UM... COULD I TRY?

UH... SURE, MISTER ...I GUESS SO,..

HEY... IS HE SICK? HE LOOKS KINDA GREEN...!

TAKE 'ER OVER THE JUMP! ITS THE MEANEST!! YA SAIL TEN FEET IN THE AIR!

ALL RIGHT!

GO CRAZY, MAN!

GANG WAY, ALL!

WOW!

EEYAH HA, HA!

WAHOO!

HA, HA, HAHA! WHAT A TRIP!

HEY, THAT WAS SOOO COOL, MISTER! WANNA GO AGAIN?

THANKS! BUT NO-- I'VE GOT TO BE GOING!

OK... SEE YA!

GOOD BYE!

NICE KIDS..!

I REALLY SHOULD HEAD BACK HOME... NAHH-- I CAN'T, NOT YET. I THINK I'LL GO THROUGH THE DOWN TOWN SHOPPING CENTERS! YEAH! MAYBE I'LL FIND SOME CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR EVERYBODY!

AFTER ALL, MY DISGUISE IS REALLY WORKING WELL! NO OWE WILL EVEN NOTICE ME, ESPECIALLY IN THESE HOLIDAY SHOPPING CROWDS...

HUH?

MEOW!!

MEOWWWW MOWWRR

AWW-- A KITTY CAT!

POOR LITTLE GUY! YOU GET LOST OUT IN THIS SNOW STORM?

MEOW

COME ON... YOU'LL BE NICE AND WARM IN HERE!

PURRRRR

NOW... LET'S GO SHOP 'TIL WE DROP!

LATER...

HERE'S SEARS

GOSH-- I KNOW THESE LIGHTS, TINSEL, AND STUFF ARE TACKY AS HECK...

...BUT I CAN'T HELP IT-- I THINK IT'S BEAUTIFUL!

GUESS I'M JUST A SAP FOR CHRISTMAS CHEER!

BLOOM & GOUNT

"BIG BARN" RU

SO MANY STORES... SO MUCH STUFF...

...WHERE DO I START? I HOPE I CAN FIND INEXPENSIVE GIFTS, I'VE ONLY GOT TEN BUCKS TO-- TO...

OH, WOW!

CHET'S TOYS

HEAVEN!

SALE!

WE HAVE WHAT YOU WANT

THESE TOYS LOOK SO COOL! I'VE JUST GOTTA GO IN! JUST FOR A FEW MINUTES...

GIZMO SPROCKET

FLUFFY

FIRST I'LL HIDE YOU, KITTY, THEN BLEND INTO A GROUP OF PEOPLE GOING IN THE STORE...

YEAH, THIS IS THE STORE I WAS TELL'N YOU ABOUT-- MORE TOYS THAN YOU COULD IMAGINE!

PERFECT!

LOOK AT'EM ALL!

WOW!

SORRY MISS, WE'RE TEM-PORARILY, OUT OF LITTLE ORPHAN ALIENS™. THERE'LL BE A NEW SHIPMENT ANY DAY!

EXIT

CHET'S TOYS

BANK

YES-- ITS THIS YEAR'S CRAZE!

OH, DEAR... I'LL TRY AGAIN LATER. THEY'RE SO CUTE-- BUT SO HARD TO FIND!

LOOK AT ALL THIS NEAT STUFF!

ACTION FIGURES, MODELS, MASKS, GALACTIC RAY GUNS-- WOW!

MEOW MRFF

MEOW

SHHH! YOU DONT WANT PEOPLE TO FIND US OUT, DO YA? HERE, I'LL GIVE YOU SOME BREATHING SPACE...

...WHILE I CHECK OUT SOME OF THESE TOYS!

RREEOOOO

ZAP ZAP

ZAP

KERDLAM!

BEEP BEEP

ZARK

I'LL GET YOU LITTLE KITTY, GAHH!

HISS:

TAKE THAT, YOU NAZI DUNG!

POW BRAT TAT-A TAT-A TAT POW POW

BP

KO

WHF

ROWR?

HERE COMES SGT. "BLOOD AND GUTS" MIKE L. ANGELO!

ZOUNDS! IT'S CAPT. DEMENTO AND HIS KILLER ROBOT CAT KLUNK!

LOOK AT THIS MELVIN MOON-HOPPER, KLUNK... ITS SUPPOSED TO HOP FOUR FEET IN THE AIR!

MEGA-ROBOT

GROK

EWR?

JUST PRESS HERE, AND--

KLICK

YOW!

BOING

HA, HA, HA! HEY, COME BACK--!

BOING

RREEOOOW

HSSSS

COME BACK, KLUNK-- IT'S O.K.--HE WON'T HURT YOU!

BOING

HERE, KITTY KITTY...

HERE, **KLUNK--!** COME ON, BOY... I WON'T SCARE YOU ANY MORE-- PROMISE!

AH, HERE YOU ARE...! THAT'S A GOOD KITTY-CAT... COME ON, WE'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE...

HUH-?

HOW CAN YOU GUYS DO THIS? WHAT KIND OF CREEPS ARE--

UNH!

SMACK!

SHUT UP!

GEEZ-- ROBBERS!

HAH! THIS JERK'S OUT COLD!

IF YOU STEAL 'EM, WHAT KIND OF CHRISTMAS WILL THOSE KIDS HAVE?

C'MON, FELLOWS-- THIS WHOLE TRUCKFUL OF L'IL ORPHAN ALIENS™ IS BEING DONATED TO THE BROWN ST. CHILDREN'S HOME!

MY HEART BLEEDS FOR THE LITTLE BRATS, POPS!

KOD

ALL *RIGGHHTT*-- THIS IS THE BIG ONE, GUYS! THIS SHIPMENT OF LIL ORPHAN ALIENS™ WILL MAKE US RICH! THOSE DOLL'S GO FIFTY BUCKS A WHACK TO THE RIGHT PEOPLE!

--AND WE JUST GOT US A WHOLE LOAD OF THE MOST SOUGHT AFTER STUPID TOY OF THE YEAR!

EYEEEOOO !!! WE'RE IN THE MONEY!

EH-- WHAZZAT!?

MEOW

HE'S SEEN US-- WASTE HIM!

HE'S HISTORY, RICO!

WWW

CLIMB BACK IN HERE, KLUNK-- TIME TO KICK SOME BUTT!

SPAK

I'LL START THE TRUCK--!

SPAK

SPAK

BACK DOORS ARE SHUT! LET'S GO!

RIGHT! HEY, YOU TURKEY-- SHOW YOUR FACE AN' YOU'RE DEAD!

I'M SHAKING IN MY MUKLUKS, PAL--

--DON'T SCARE ME ANY MORE, OKAY?

OPEN

SPAK

FUPP!

NO PARK-ING - LOAD-ING ZONE

VROOM

RRRRR

HEH? WHAT KINDA CRAZY--?!

GO, HECTOR, GO!!!

THEY'RE PULLING OUT! I'VE GOT TO CATCH THEM--

--IF I CAN!

VERRROOF

WAIT! THE CORD FROM THAT WORK LIGHT--

--IT WAS CAUGHT IN THE TRUCK'S BACK DOOR!

IF I CAN REACH THAT!

YAAH--!

GOT IT!

ROAR

YOW!

CHET'S TOYS

C'MON, HECTOR-- GET THIS HUNK'O JUNK MOVING, MAN!

URP?

SHUT UP, GRONK-- WHATCHA THINK I'M DOING!?

HEY! THAT LITTLE GUY I SHOT AT IS HANGIN' ON T' THE TRUCK!

YIKES! WE'D BETTER GET IN THE BACK, KLUNK, BEFORE THIS CORD SNAPS!

SKREEEE

FIRST THE DOOR LATCH--

KICK

KLICK

-- DOOR SWINGS OPEN--

--AND WE'RE IN!

OW!

BOMP

HE STILL THERE?

DONT KNOW-- I CAN'T SEE HIM!

CHEZ TOYS

NEXT STOP-LIGHT, JUMP OUT AND CHECK!

UNDER THIS BLANKET YOU GO, KLUNK-- THE ACTION'S ABOUT TO GET ROUGH!

THIS IS GOOD-- NOBODY BEHIND US--

GO CHECK THE BACK!

C'MON, MOVE IT!

HECTOR'S TOO PARANOID-- THERE AIN'T NO ONE HERE!

I DUNNO-- CHECK INSIDE...

BUT WATCH OUT!

JUST A LITTLE CLOSER, MEATHEAD!

LOCK'S BROKEN... HMMM...

WHAT THE--!?

ALLOW ME TO PUT MY BEST FOOT FORWARD!

AND AS FOR YOU "MACK THE KNIFE..."

...YOUR BLADE'S A LOT SHARPER THAN YOU ARE!

KSP

GEEZ-- THEY DON'T MAKE SLEAZY THUGS LIKE THEY USED TO!

CRIPES--! THAT LITTLE PUKE BEAT GRONK AND PIRO?! AH, IT FIGURES! DORKS! HE WON'T GET ME, THOUGH!

HE'S SEEN ME-- AND BOOKING IT!

GOTTA GET THE BUMPER!

UNH... I CAN'T HOLD ON!

RRRRR

OWW!

WHISSSS

IF I'M LUCKY, AND THIS GUY IS JUST RUNNING BLINDLY TRYING TO LOSE ME--

I CAN ONLY HOPE HE TURNS RIGHT AT THE NEXT LIGHT!

HAH! CAN CALL'EM OR WHAT!?

RRRRR

FIRST-- GRAB THE BUMPER--

NO SWEAT THIS TIME--!

THEN INTO THE BACK FOR A QUICK *BREATHER*...

...BEFORE GETTING TO THE MAIN COURSE!

ONE, TWO, THREE--

--AND INTO--

--THE CAB!

YAAU!

UH-- OH!

HOLY--!

DUNG! THE ROOF WAS TOO SOLID AND ICY-- I'M SLIPPING OFF!

HOLD, MIRROR-- PLEASE!

AAGHH... NOOO--!

OK, "BIG GUY"...

...YOUR DRIVING IS GETTING ON MY NERVES!

GAK!

ZZZZZZ

BEEP BEEP

HOUFF!

OUT YOU GO! AND BY THE WAY--

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

YAI!

SHOOT! TRAFFIC! CARS AND PEOPLE-- I'M DRAWING ATTENTION TO MYSELF!

TIME TO SPLIT THIS SCENE!

BEEP BEEP HONK

MOVE THAT TRUCK!

BUT-- I CAN'T JUST LEAVE THIS TRUCK HERE--! I KNOW! I'LL DRIVE IT BACK TO THE STORE!

THIS WILL BE FUN!

CHET'S TOYS

FIRST I'D BETTER GET CLEAR OF THESE PEOPLE!

GOOD THING THIS BABY'S AN AUTO-MATIC!

YOU O.K. PAL...?

HEY-- HOLD THAT GUY, AND CALL THE COPS--! HE'S A CROOK!

UHH...

MINUTES LATER

HEY, CHECK IT OUT!

NO KIDDING!?

LET'S ROLL!

THERE'S THAT TRUCK FULL OF L'IL ORPHAN ALIENS™ REPORTED STOLEN FROM CHET'S TOYS OVER ON 42ND STREET!

HEY, WHEN WE CATCH HIM, YOU MIND IF I GRAB A DOLL FOR MY KID? SHE LOVES THE THINGS, BUT I CAN NEVER FIND 'EM!

HONK HONK

SURE! MIGHT GRAB A COUPLE MYSELF!

WEEOOOOO

CAR 112 IN PURSUIT OF STOLEN TRUCK, HEADED SOUTH ON 153rd STREET!

ROGER! UNITS 94 AND 103 WILL CONVERGE AND SET UP A ROAD-BLOCK AT HUDSON AVE!

RRRRR

SKREEE

OOHHH... HOW COULD I BE SO STUPID? OF COURSE THE COPS MUST BE SEARCHING HIGH AND LOW FOR THIS TRUCK!

WEEEOOOOO

I HATE TO DO THIS TO YOU GUYS, BUT--

WHAT CHOICE DO I HAVE?

WATCH OUT--!

AGH--!

SORRY ABOUT THAT!

YAARRGGG!

KRAKOOM!

--BUT I CAN'T AFFORD TO BE STOPPED, ESPECIALLY WHEN I'M DRIVING THIS **HOT** TRUCK!

3176

HOW DO I GET MIXED UP IN THESE THINGS?

NOW I'VE GOT TO DITCH THIS HEAD!

C'MON, YOU HUNK, OF--!

RRRRR

-CLIK-

RRRRR

CLIK-

-CLIK-

OH, NOO--

--ROAD BLOCK!

CAN'T GO RIGHT-- CAN'T GO LEFT--

ONLY STRAIGHT ON!

YOU IN THE TRUCK--

PULL IT OVER, PAL!

I'D LOVE TO, "PAL" -- BUT YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND!

HE'S NOT STOPPING--!

FIRE!

PNOW

SPAK

SPAK

FWAP

VROOOM

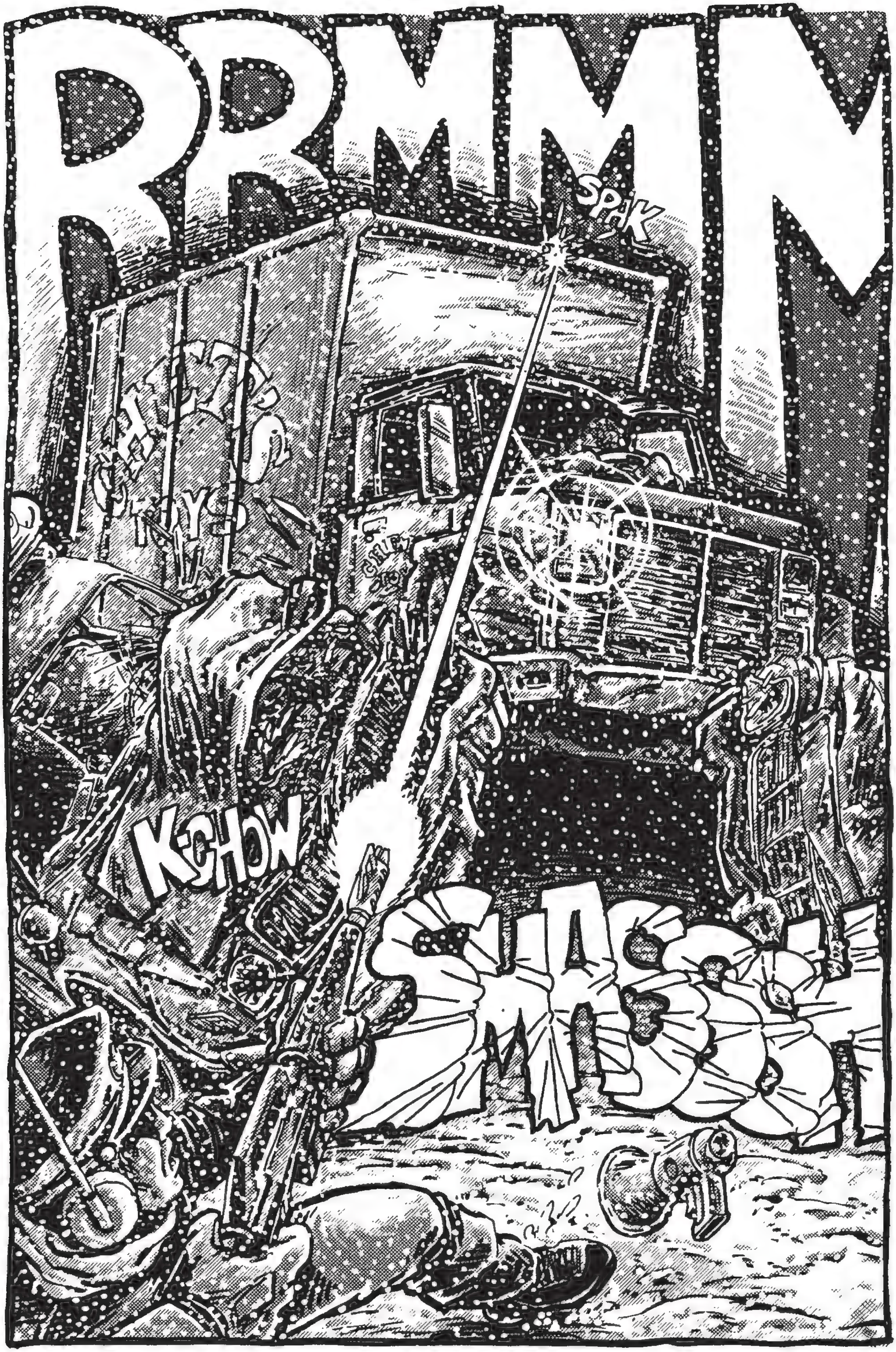
PH-CHUNK

CHEE-

WHAT TH--?! THE FOOL'S GONNA RAM US--!

EAT YOUR HEART OUT, MEL GIBSON!

JUMP FOR IT!


RPM
SPAK
K-CHOW

BLAM

CEASE FIRE! CEASE FIRE!

WE BLEW IT--HE'S TOO FAR AWAY ALREADY! GEEZ!

BRATATT BRRA

POW POW

OOOWEEEOOOWWEEOOO

OWEEOWOOWO

WHEW!

THAT WAS CLOSE!

GUESS I PICKED THE RIGHT ALLEY TO HIDE IN!

SALOON

HEY--! IN ALL THIS EXCITEMENT, I FORGOT ABOUT KLUNK!

HOPE HE'S OKAY!

HEY, KLUNK OL' BOY! YOU ALL RIGHT?!

MEOW

WHAT A TOUGH LITTLE FELLA! YOU'RE MY KINDA KITTY!

THAT WAS SOME RIDE, EH?

DON'T I DRIVE GREAT?

SO LONG, L'IL ORPHAN ALIENS™! KLUNK AND I ARE OUTA HERE!

AW... WHAT A WASTE, THOUGH! ONCE THE COPS FIND THIS TRUCK, THESE TOYS WILL BE *IMPOUNDED* AS *EVIDENCE* AND THEY'LL NEVER GET TO THE KIDS AT THAT BROWN STREET CHILDREN'S HOME BY CHRISTMAS...

...WHICH JUST HAPPENS TO BE TOMORROW! I'VE GOTTA GET THESE TOYS TO THOSE KIDS--!

BUT IT'S DANGEROUS TO DRIVE THIS HOT TRUCK AROUND TOWN... I'LL NEED SOME HELP...

...AND I KNOW JUST THE GUYS!

EIGHTEEN FIRE ESCAPES AND THIRTY-THREE ROOFTOPS LATER...

HANG ON KLUNK-- WE'RE AL-MOST THERE!

SURE HOPE EVERYBODY'S STILL UP--!

HEY, GUYS--! YOU'LL NEVER BELIEVE WHAT HAPPENED TO ME--!

YO, MIKE!

MICHELANGELO! HAVE A NICE COLD WALK?!

ZZST

HI APRIL!

HI, MIKE! WHAT'S UP?

WAIT 'TIL YOU ALL HEAR THIS--!

MEOWOW!

EH?

WOOPS! NOT THAT, BUT BEFORE I GO ON, YOU GOTTA MEET MY NEW PAL, KLUNK!

HEY-- NOW THAT'S MY KIND OF MOUSER!

AW, WHAT A CUTIE! I LIKE HIM!

HA, HA HA!

KLUNK IS JUST THE BEGINNING-- LISTEN TO WHAT HAPPENED TO ME TODAY--!

SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

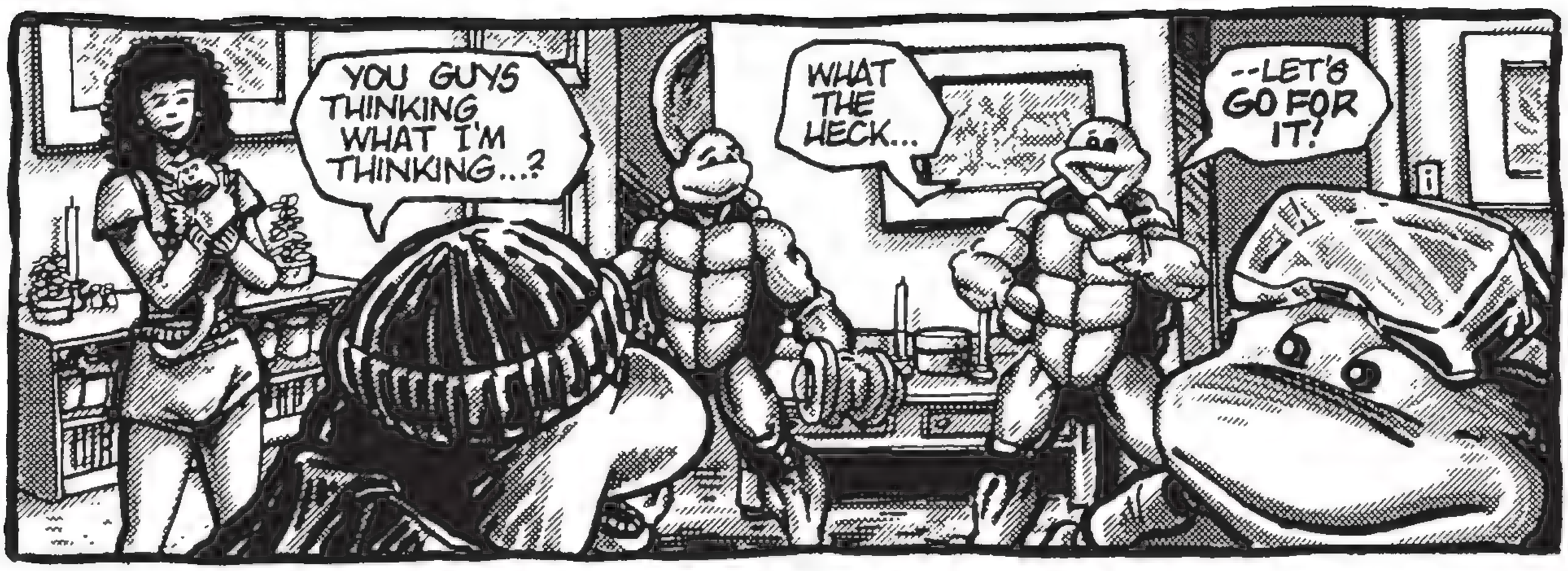
SO, ANYWAY, I'VE GOT A TRUCKFUL OF STOLEN LIL ORPHAN ALIEN™ DOLLS THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DELIVERED TO THAT KID'S HOME. SO NOW WHAT DO WE DO?

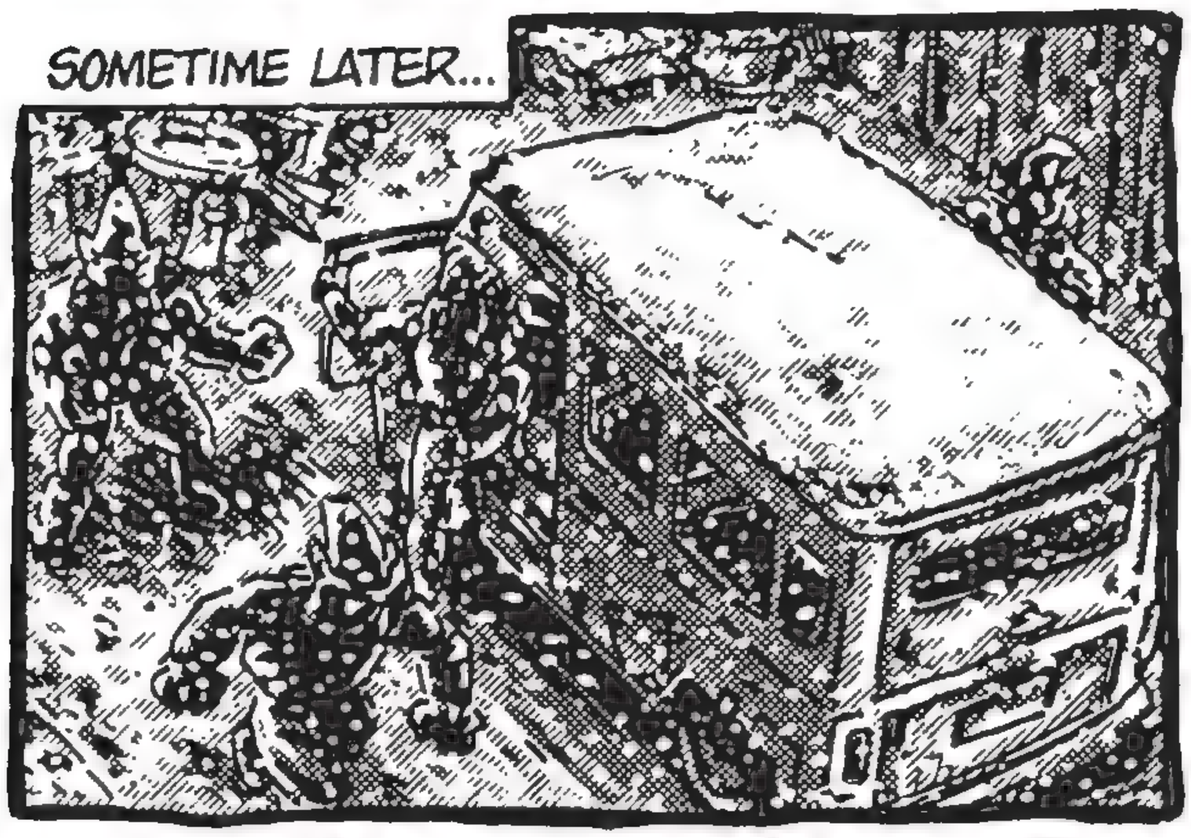
WELL, WE COULD CALL THE POLICE AND TELL THEM WHERE YOU HID THE TRUCK. BUT, LIKE YOU SAID, THEY'D JUST CONFISCATE THE TOYS...

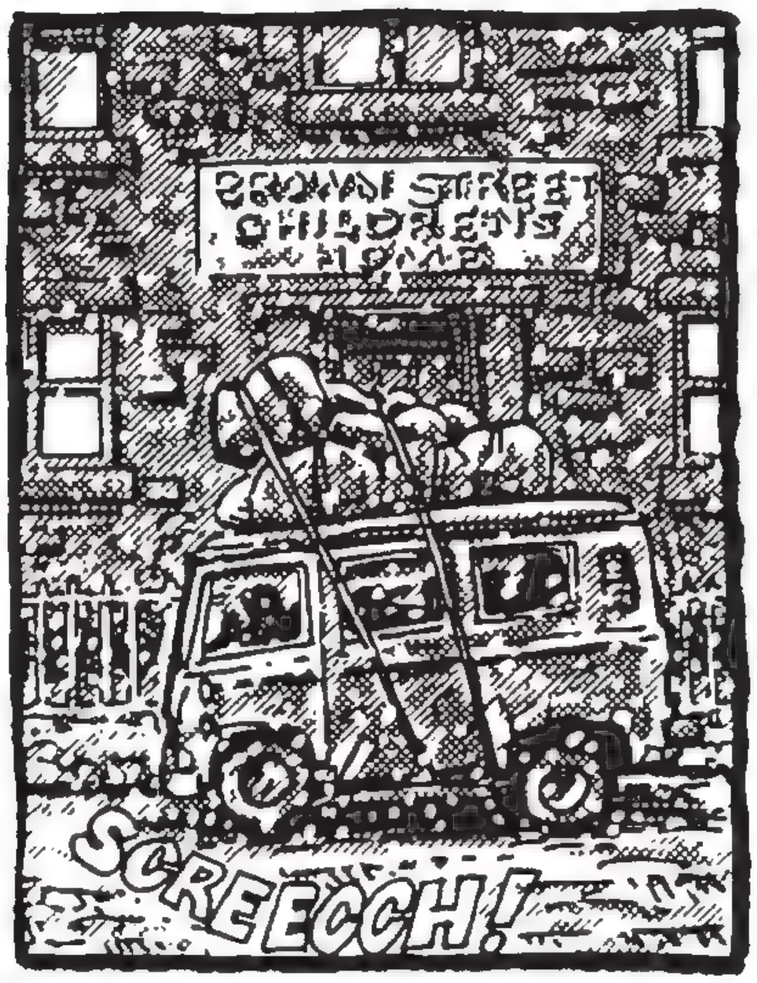
...AND HOLD THEM AS EVIDENCE FOR WHO KNOWS HOW LONG?

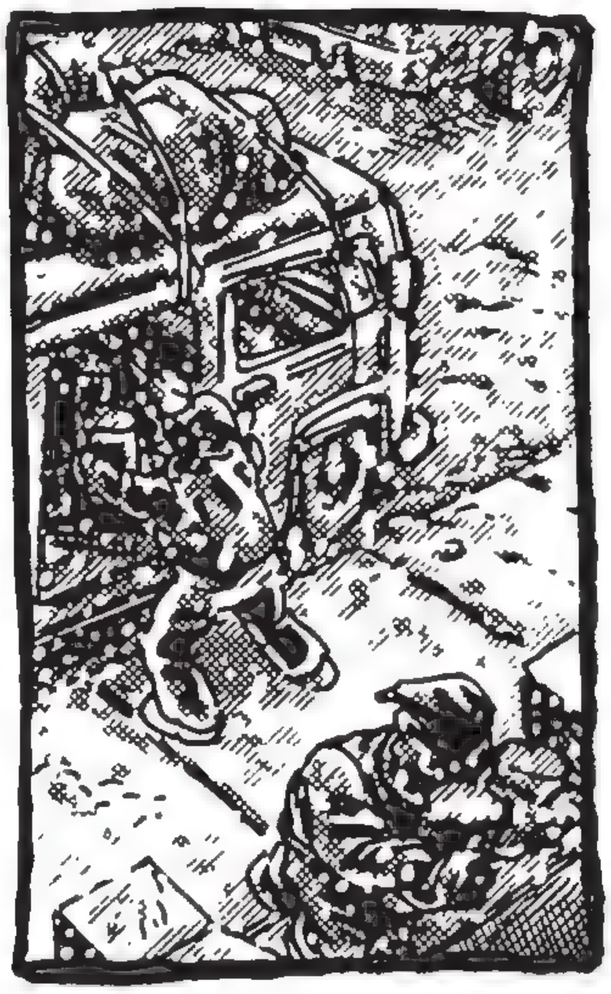
...AND IF WE WERE CAUGHT DRIVING THAT TRUCK...!

I DON'T KNOW... IT'S PRETTY RISKY... STILL, THOSE KIDS WOULD LOVE TO GET THOSE DOLLS...


YOU GUYS THINKING WHAT I'M THINKING...?
WHAT THE HECK...
--LET'S GO FOR IT!


SOMETIME LATER...


SCREECCH!



OUR FOUNDER
CHET BROWN
BROWN STREET CHILDRENS HOME
MERRY CHRISTMAS
TO ALL !!!
HO, HO, HO!
EXIT
LIL' ORPHAN ALIEN
"... and to all, a good night!"
—THE END—

ANNOTATIONS

KEVIN EASTMAN

Growing up in the countryside of Maine, Christmas was pretty awesome. Usually it was very white, with mountains of snow, and the woodstove burning twenty-four-seven; for a kid it was pretty magical. A Norman Rockwell painting brought to life, even though we had no idea what a Norman Rockwell painting was at the time.

Although we didn't have very much money, we had a grandmother who apparently did. Every year she would drive up from Rhode Island in some massive V8-powered car, the beast stuffed to the ceiling with presents, and Christmas morning we would have an epic ceremony straight out of a crazy holiday movie.

A very happy time with many happy memories, and once I'd grown up I realized how special those were—especially when a classic movie like *A Christmas Story* came out! Like a lot of people, I felt like it was based, in many ways, on me and my family… and although it wasn't a Red Ryder, I remember asking for and getting a BB gun for Christmas one year. So did a few of my friends, and WE ALL had them taken away after a close range shoot out almost cost a neighbor kid his eye!

Anyhow, when it came to brainstorming the next "One in a one-issue Micro-Series" issue, we chose Michaelangelo—who would be perfect to tell a Christmas story with. And if we got on it, it would actually release in time to become a stocking stuffer!

This issue actually came out in 1985—thus, in the production pipeline, would have been in stores between issue #5 that came out in October 1985, and issue #6 that came out in February 1986. Back when Peter and I packaged the original limited edition hardcover/softcover omnibus in 1988 we moved the order around a bit so the complete collected work would flow better.

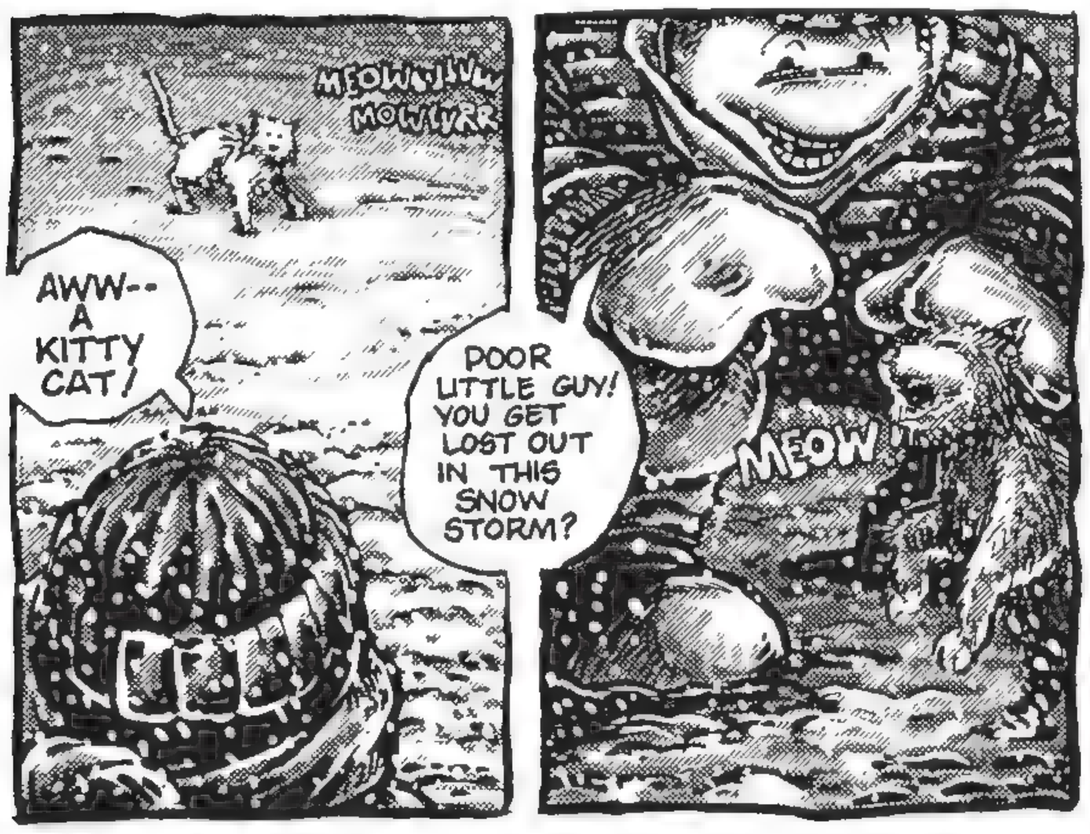
PETER LAIRD

Keen-eyed readers of the original Eastman and Laird TMNT comics probably are aware that the name "Chet" pops up quite a few times in those issues. There was really no reason other than the fact that, for some reason, at that time, Kevin and I found the name humorous. I don't really know why.

ANNOTATIONS

Page 1: This is a picture-perfect splash page, and I think it could only have been brought to life by a couple of guys who grew up in New England (but of course that's just personal opinion). We both loved the idea that winter would be the ideal time for the guys to move around the city more easily, as they could be all bundled up in snow gear.

This was a nice issue. It moved well, it was shorter, and it was meant to make everyone who read it feel good—and the guys drawing it even better.



Page 4: A favorite page of mine, as we added Klunk the cat to the group! I have to wonder if this was around the time Steve Lavigne's cat Tigger showed up at the apartment we were sharing and never left. Klunk stayed with the TMNTs for many years after this guest spot.

Page 5: This looks more specifically like a shot of Bedford Falls than New York City, yet it could also fit into parts of the East Village if you squint your eyes a little bit at the real one. I remember—this page pretty much sums it up—looking back and realizing we got a little carried away with adding the snow. I think a little could have gone a long way.

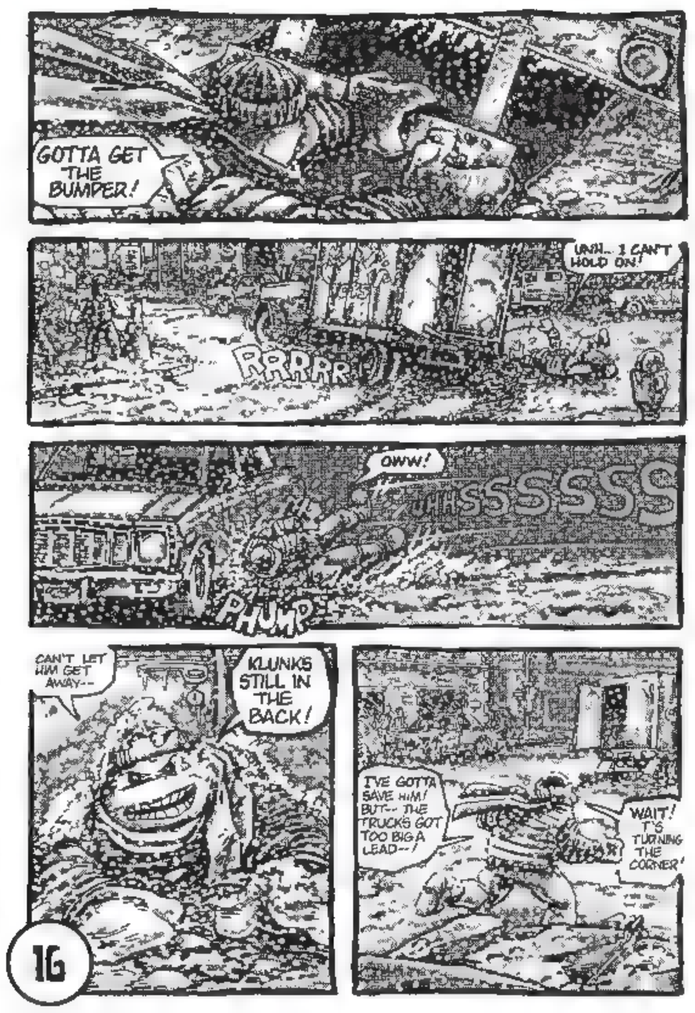
Page 6: Ah, "Chet's Toy's." Chet would be a joke name that we would use for many a background sign, right up until we made him a full character. The boy holding the bowl of turtles in the origin story and the shot looking out through the window as Mike looks in is right out of the *A Christmas Story* film.

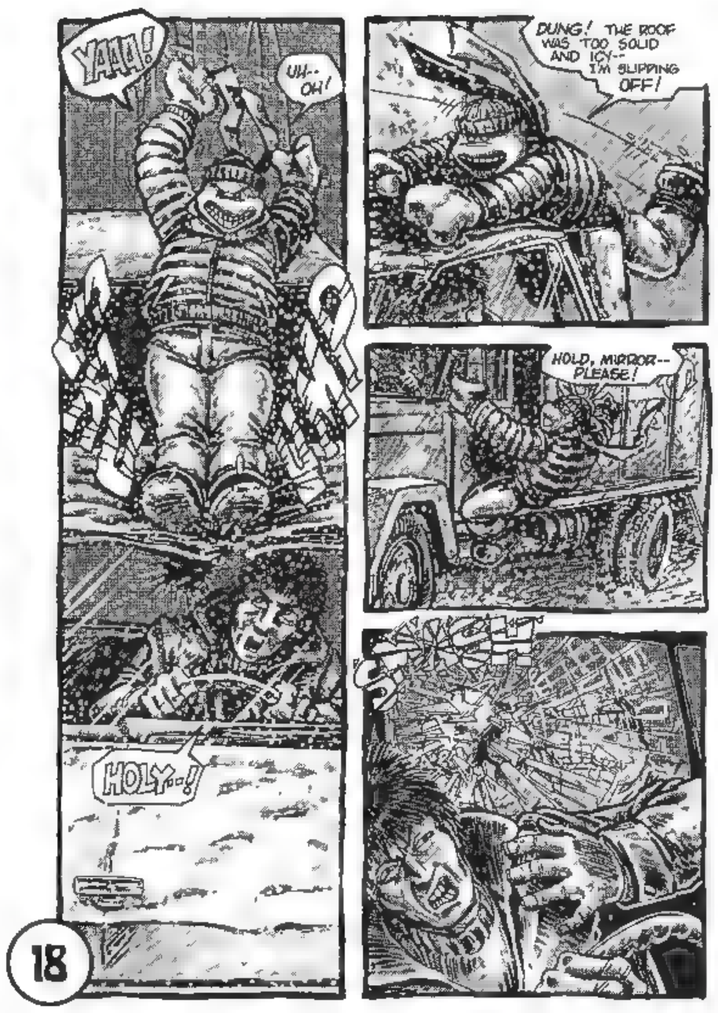
Page 7: Besides toys being a favorite pastime of ours, it was fun to have Michaelangelo strolling down a toy aisle. And this is where we planted the "Hot Toy of the Year" plot point, and the "Little Orphan Aliens" were born! Based, obviously, on the Cabbage Patch craze, this more than serviced the need.

Page 10: The drawing of the toy store worker at the bottom right of the page still cracks me up to this day. I can't remember which one of us originally drew it—it looks like Pete did the finished inks—but to me he looks like Ronald Reagan!

Pages 12–13: These were more fun pages and another film-inspired sequence, this one borrowed from *Beverly Hills Cop 2*—the scene where Eddie Murphy was swinging around on the back of the semi-truck in the opening moments. We needed to move the story along with an action bit, and the "hot" toys getting stolen as they were being loaded for delivery to an orphanage hit that sweet spot.

ANNOTATIONS





Pages 14–24: Pages like this are pretty much my true love. I love doing this stuff—it is almost like it's completely separate from the rest of the story, yet it is completely critical to make the story work—action stuff. I'm sure Peter and I talked through what we would have liked to see here, but in the spirit of how our working relationship evolved to by this time in 1985, he would have let me play it out, and come back for the final staging.

I could have done whole issues like this and had a blast, and pretty much did with the Leonardo issue, but this was where you make the beats click and try to send the audience's excitement through the roof.

All that, in the middle of a snowstorm, in New York City, in a beat-up delivery truck, crashing and bashing along tight city streets while a turtle and a stray cat try to keep Christmas coming for a house full of orphans. A collective "Awww!" is allowable here.

Pages 24–25: Reading it now, it does seem like the shootout with police and destroying a bunch of their patrol cars in the process doesn't exactly scream "holiday cheer." But as a storytelling device, it was more than an acceptable tool on the big screen, so it didn't feel too out of place here. Man, that was a lot of snow we put in on those pages.

Page 30: It was fun to bring it all back home to the heart of the season in the last few pages, leading up to this Christmas splash. But Mike got the idea that if the stolen truck and the toys were turned over to the police they would sit in impoundment as evidence, and the kids would never have a proper surprise. So he got the other TMNTs and April to pitch in—that was even better.

Besides, we couldn't miss the chance to have the guys, being green and all, dress up for the part as Santa's helper elves. And April, right down to her pointy ears, was the icing on the old fruitcake!

Finally, I have to mention that Brown Street was a street where I had a job in a deli back in the Westbrook, Maine days—and I see that Chet makes another appearance as "Our Founder Chet Brown" at the bottom of the portrait at the top of the stairs.

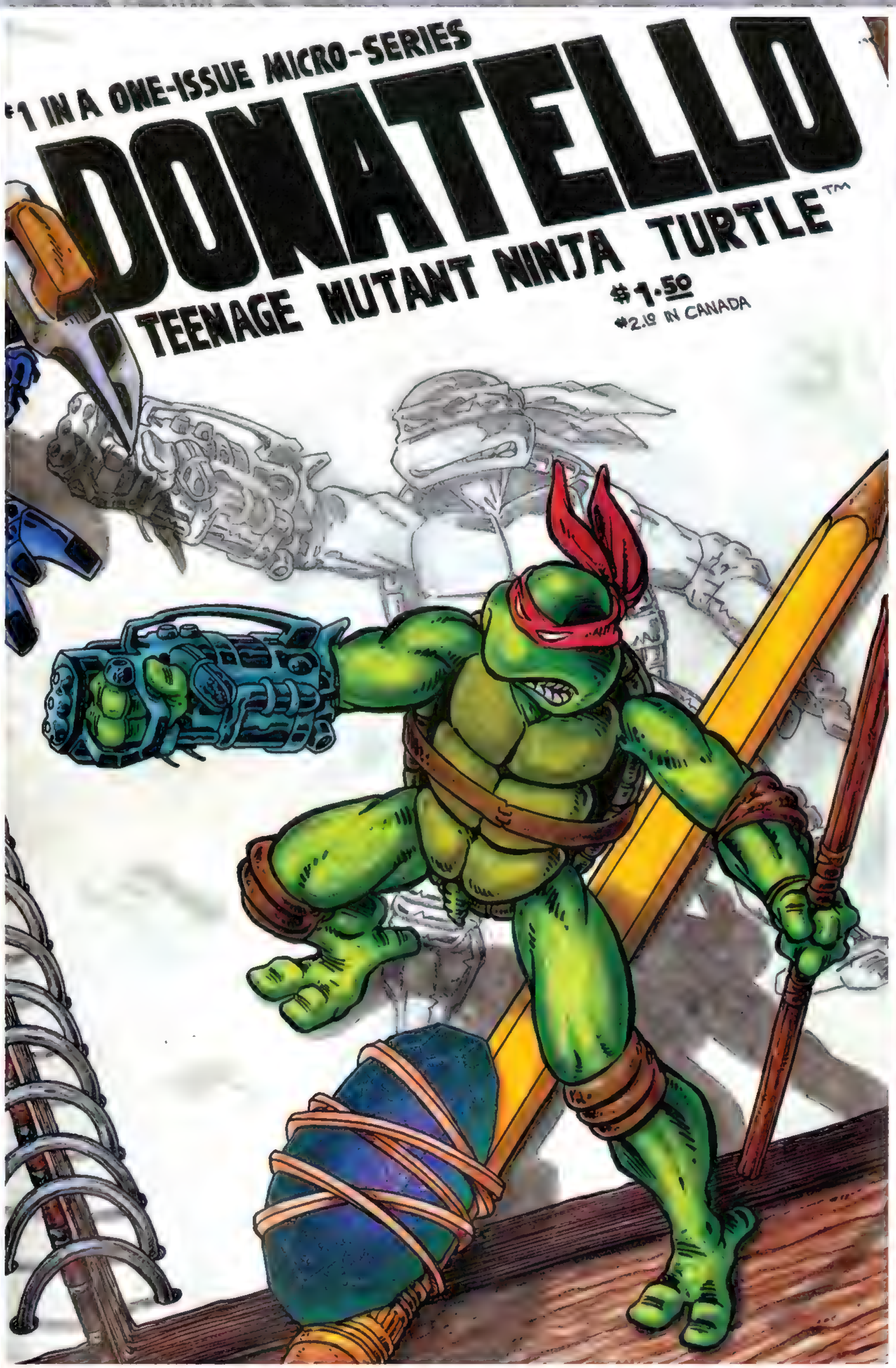
Merry Christmas!

#1 IN A ONE-ISSUE MICRO-SERIES

DONATELLO

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE™

$1.50
$2.10 IN CANADA



DONATELLO

HEY, DONATELLO! CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE HOT WATER?!

A GUY CAN'T TAKE A DECENT SHOWER AROUND HERE!

RAPHAEL, DO I LOOK LIKE A PLUMBER? CAN'T YOU SEE THAT I'M BUSY?!

WELL, YEAH -- BUT THIS IS IMPORTANT!

I HATE COLD SHOWERS!

MAYBE IF YOU ASK DON NICELY, RAPHAEL...!

GEEZ, WHAT FOR? HE'S GOTTA USE THE SHOWER TOO!

RAPHAEL, YOU ARE JUST TOO MUCH...

HE MAY BE RUDE, DON, BUT HE DOES HAVE A POINT! IF YOU CAN FIX THAT PIECE OF JUNK HOT WATER HEATER, I WON'T HAVE TO CALL A REPAIR MAN.

YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT APRIL--

--I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO!

OH, DON'T FORGET TO KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR KIRBY-- YOU KNOW, THE GUY I LEASED THAT LITTLE OFFICE SPACE TO, IN THE FRONT CELLAR.

HE'S IN AND OUT ALL THE TIME, AND IF HE SAW YOU--!

GOT YOU COVERED THERE, APRIL-- REMEMBER, WE'VE HAD ALMOST 'SIX-TEEN' YEARS TO PRACTICE!

HMM... DARK DOWN HERE...

KIRBY MUST BE OUT...

NOW-- WHICH WAY TO THE WATER HEATER...?

HEY-- WHAT THE HECK IS THAT NOISE--?!

IT SOUNDS LIKE--

REEAWK!

WINGS FLAPPING--

YOW!

STORY + ART
EASTMAN + LAIRD
LETTERING AND PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
STEVE LAVIGNE

EASTMAN AND LAIRD'S
DONATELLO,
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
IN
"KIRBY AND THE WARP CRYSTAL"

SCREAWWK

WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT?!!

IT FLEW INTO THIS DEAD-END CORRIDOR--

--THERE'S NO WAY FOR IT TO GET--

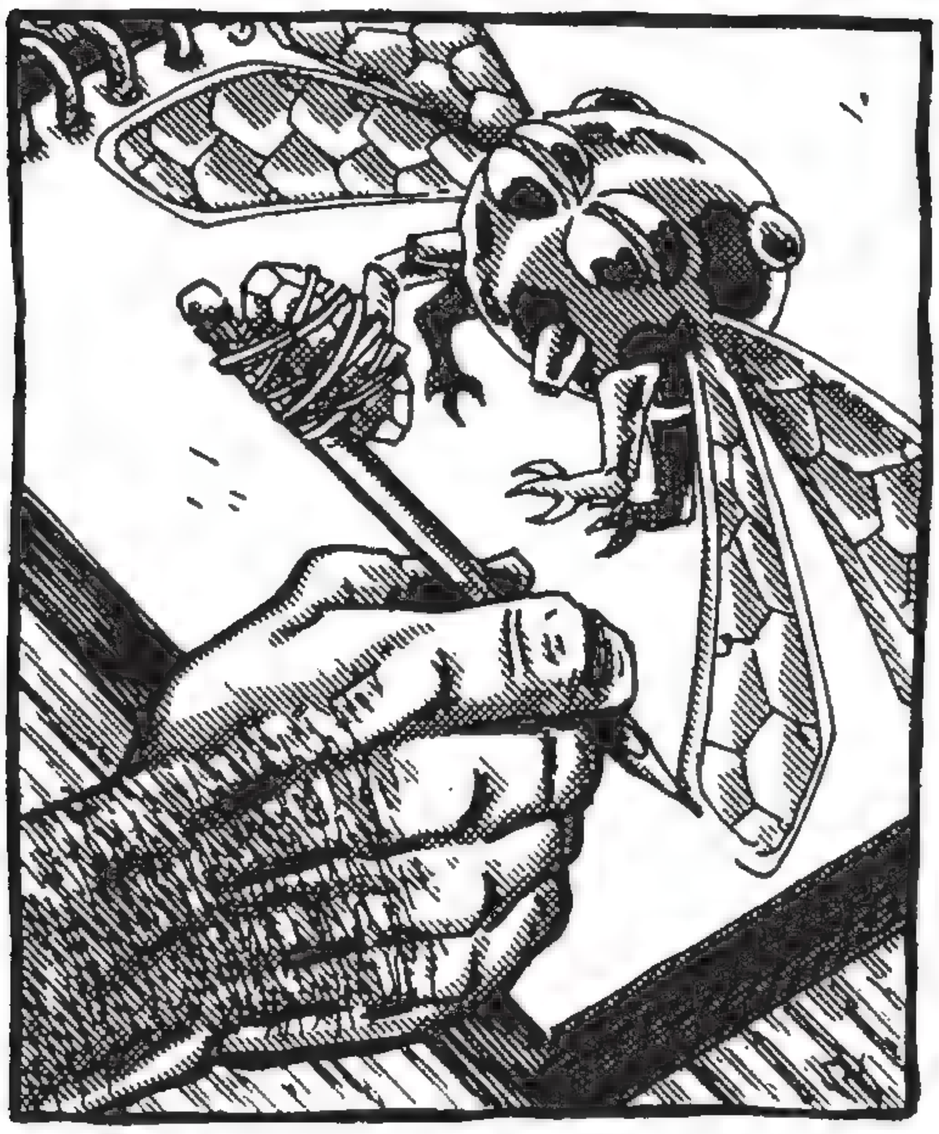
--PAST ME...?!

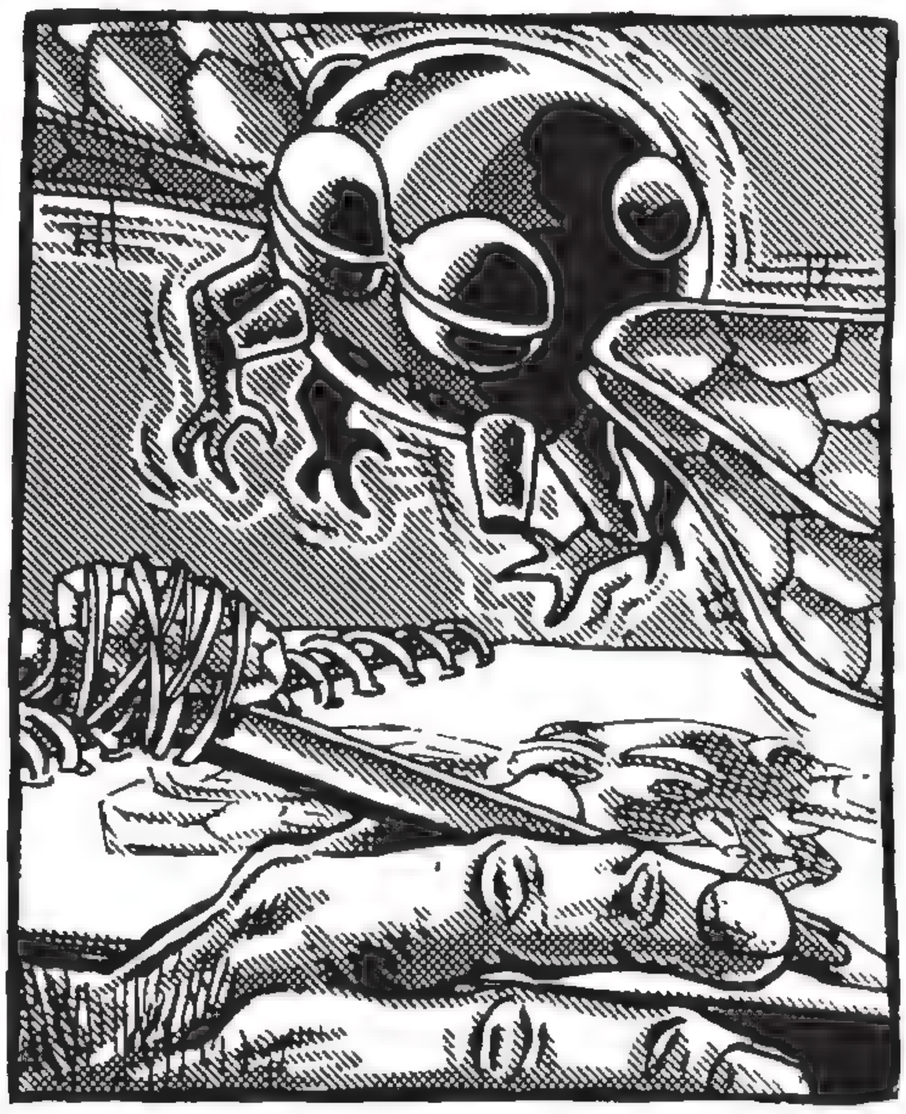
W-WHERE'D IT GO?

NO DOORS OR WINDOWS... AND THIS WALL IS AS SOLID AS IT LOOKS!

HOW COULD IT VANISH LIKE THAT? MAYBE IF I RETRACE ITS FLIGHT PATH, I CAN FIND SOME ANSWERS--!

HMM... LIGHT COMING FROM THE FRONT OFFICE--
BURGLARS?
OH, IT MUST BE KIRBY!
WHAT'S HE DOING?





GACK! HOW'D HE DO THAT?!

HOLYCOW--! A GREEN ALIEN! I DON'T REMEMBER DRAWING YOU-- SO YOU MUST BE REAL! YOU'VE COME FOR YOUR CRYSTAL, RIGHT? HECK, I WAS JUST BORROWING IT FOR A WHILE-- NO NEED FOR ROUGH STUFF, OKAY PAL?!

SLOW DOWN, FRIEND! I KNOW I MUST LOOK ODD TO YOU, BUT I'M NO ALIEN-- AND DEFINITELY NOT HOSTILE!

MY NAME IS DONATELLO--

--AND I'M FASCINATED BY WHAT YOU JUST DID! HOW ON EARTH--?!

OH, IT'S NOT REALLY ME... I MEAN, I CAN DRAW, SURE; BEEN DOING IT FOR YEARS-- BUT IT'S THE CRYSTAL HERE THAT SUPPLIES THE MAGIC!

HERE, TRY IT OUT!

LET ME FIND YOU A CLEAN PAGE.

WOW, THANKS! I'M AFRAID I'M NOT MUCH OF AN ARTIST, BUT THIS IS TOO INCREDIBLE TO PASS UP!

WHERE DID YOU FIND IT?

I FOUND IT A FEW MONTHS BACK IN A PILE OF COAL... AND ACCIDENTALLY DISCOVERED WHAT IT COULD DO....!

I'M AFRAID A STICK PERSON IS THE BEST I CAN DO!

AW, DON'T WORRY..IT TAKES A FEW YEARS OF PRACTICE BEFORE YOU CAN REALLY HAVE FUN! NOT A BAD STICK GUY, THOUGH!

OH, RIGHT! HA, HA, HA! THERE, FINISHED!

YOWSA!

AAAH!

HEE HEE HEE

HEE HEE

THIS IS TOO WILD!

DUM DEE DUM DEE

DA DA

DA-DEE

BLIP

WOW, THAT WAS REALLY NEAT! THANKS FOR LETTING ME TRY IT!

OH, YOU'RE VERY WELCOME! YOU'RE THE FIRST PERSON BESIDES MYSELF TO USE IT!

DON'T ASK ME HOW IT WORKS... BUT I'VE BEEN HAVING FUN WITH IT!

AFTER I FOUND IT...

...I STARTED A NEW SKETCH-BOOK, AND SO FAR EVERY-THING I'VE DRAWN HAS LEAPT FROM THE PAGE AS A LIVING 3-D CHARACTER!

STRANGE THING IS, THESE THINGS DON'T LAST MORE THAN A MINUTE OR SO BEFORE POOF! THEY VANISH!

OH, THERE WAS ONE EXCEPTION-- A THING I DREW A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO!

IT DIDN'T GO AWAY... AND IT'S TOO HEAVY TO MOVE... SO I COVERED IT UP WITH JUNK...

THERE YA GO! CAN'T RIGHTLY TELL YOU WHAT IT IS-- BUT IT SURE IS SOMETHING!

WOW!

OH, PARDON MY MANNERS, DONATELLO-- MY FRIENDS CALL ME KIRBY!

PLEASURE TO MEET YOU, KIRBY! YOU CAN CALL ME DON!

GEEZ, THIS THING IS WILD! YOU'VE GOT QUITE AN IMAGINATION, KIRBY... LOOKS LIKE A WEIRD KIND OF WINDOW... OR DOORWAY!

WHOA!

THIS IS INCREDIB

HEY! BE CAREFUL--!

DON! DON, CAN YOU HEAR ME, PAL?!

DON--!

AAH!

KIRBY, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE THIS--!

--YOU'VE GOT TO SEE WHAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS THING!

WHAT THE HECK...

...LEAD ON MACDUFF!

LEMME JUST GRAB MY SKETCH-BOOK--!

HURRY!

GERONIMO!

YEOWW!

GOTCHA!

THAT LAST STEP'S A DOOZY, EH?

GOOD CATCH, DON-- THANKS!

NO PROB, KIRBY!

HEY-- CHECK OUT THAT WEIRDO!

LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING YOU'D DRAW--!

GRIPES-- IT IS! I REMEMBER DOODLING THAT ONE! COULD... COULD THIS BE WHERE ALL THOSE THINGS WENT TO WHEN THEY VANISHED?!

IT'S IGNORING US-- AND BOOKING IT OVER THAT HILL!

WONDER WHAT'S SO INTERESTING ON THE OTHER SIDE?

SOUNDS LIKE QUITE A RUCKUS!

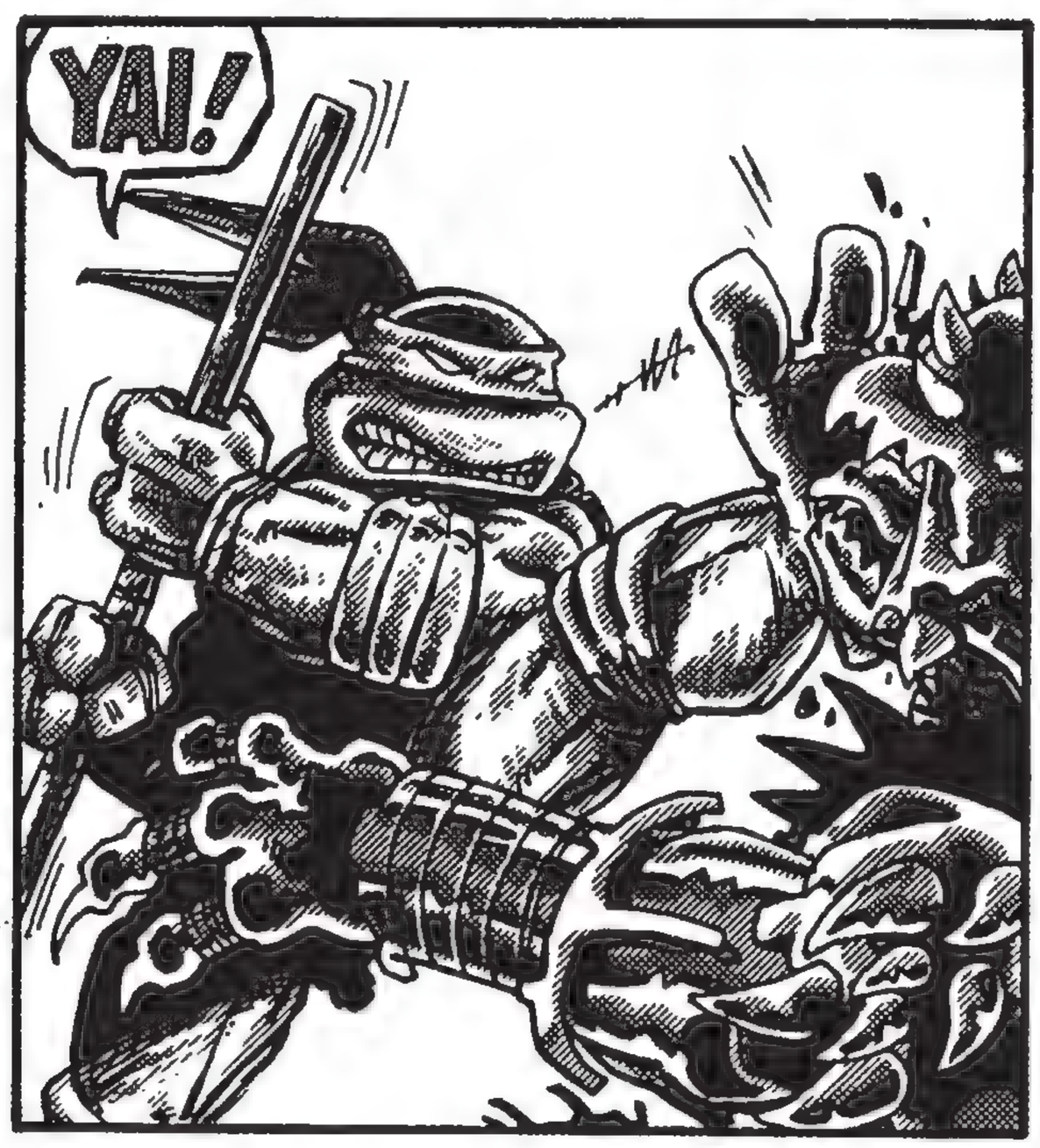
GOOD LORD!!!

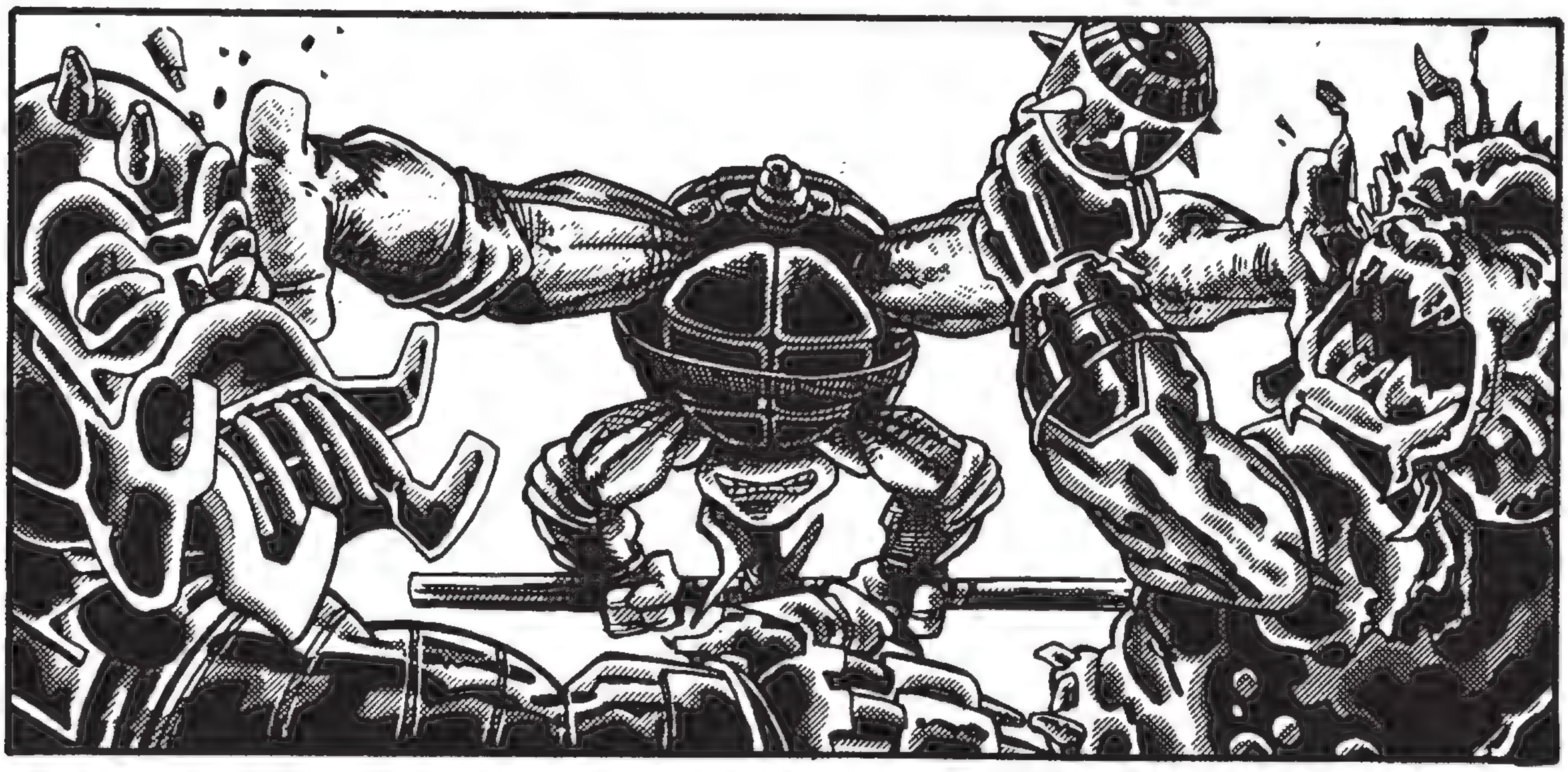
WOW, KIRBY--! LOOK AT ALL THE WEIRDIES-- ARE THEY ALL YOUR CREATIONS?!!

YES, THEY ARE!-- AND LOOK--THEY'RE GANGING UP ON THE HUMAN TYPES!

UH-OH... WE'VE BEEN SPOTTED!
STAY BEHIND ME, KIRBY!

HAH!


YAH!



WE NEED HELP, KIRBY--! THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THESE THINGS!

WAIT! I'VE GOT AN IDEA--!

IF THE CRYSTAL WORKS IN THIS WORLD...

...AND IF THE RESULTS ARE MORE PERMANENT HERE... IT MIGHT WORK!

YOW!! WHAT THE HECK--?!

I CALL IT A "GRAVITIC EQUALIZER"-- IT CANCELS THE GRAVITY EQUATION!

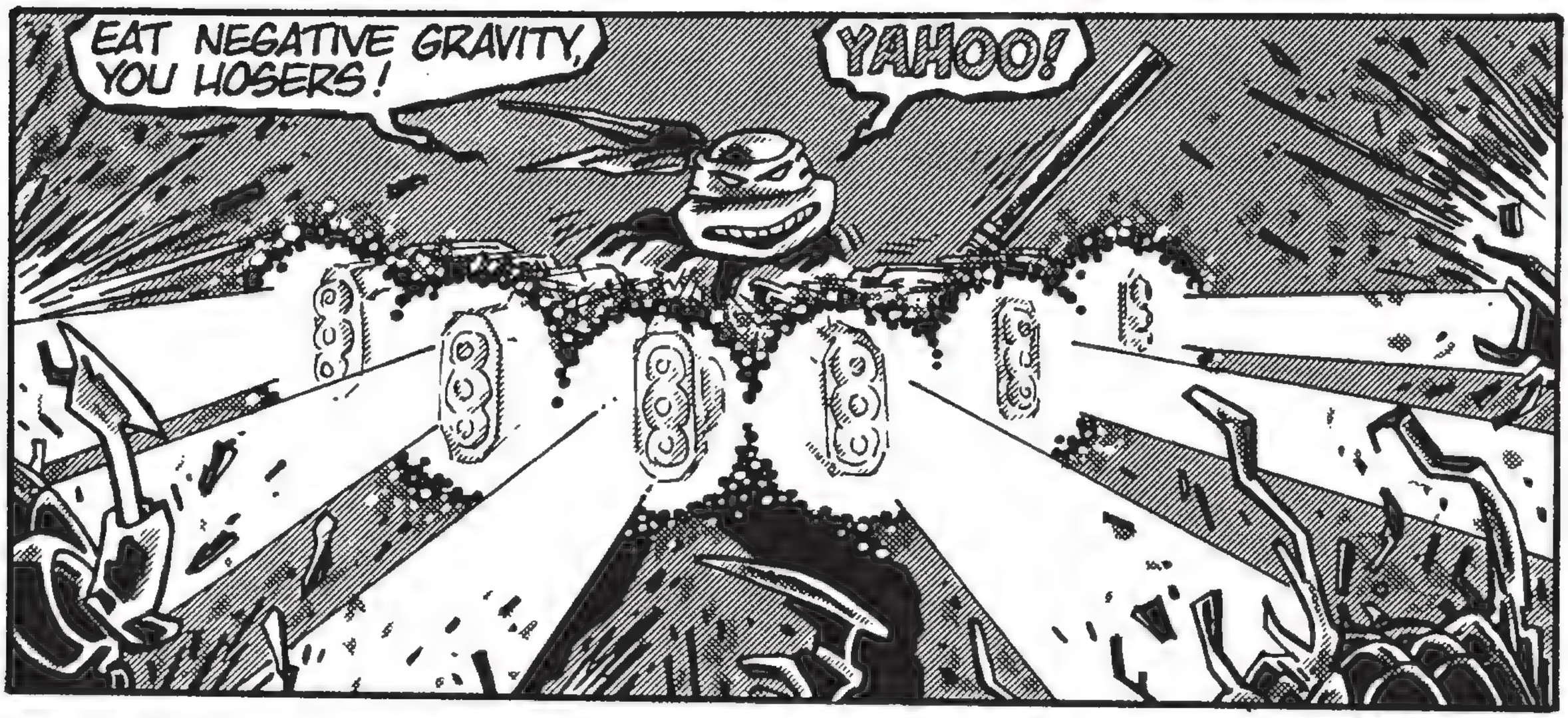
JUST POINT IT-- AND PRESS THE THUMB BUTTON!

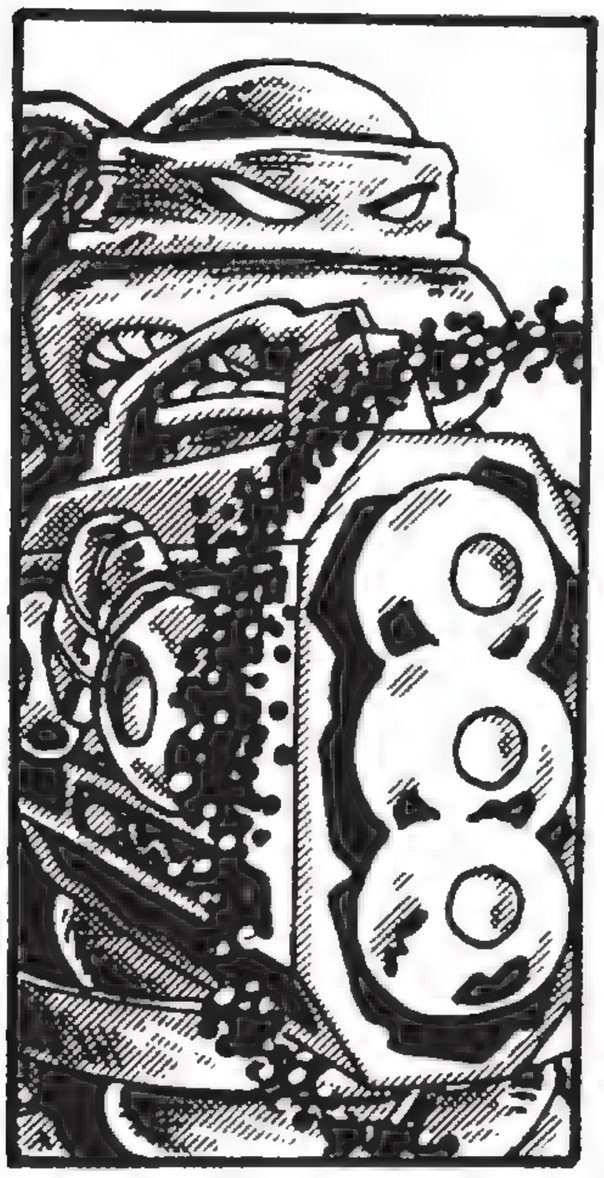
OKAY...

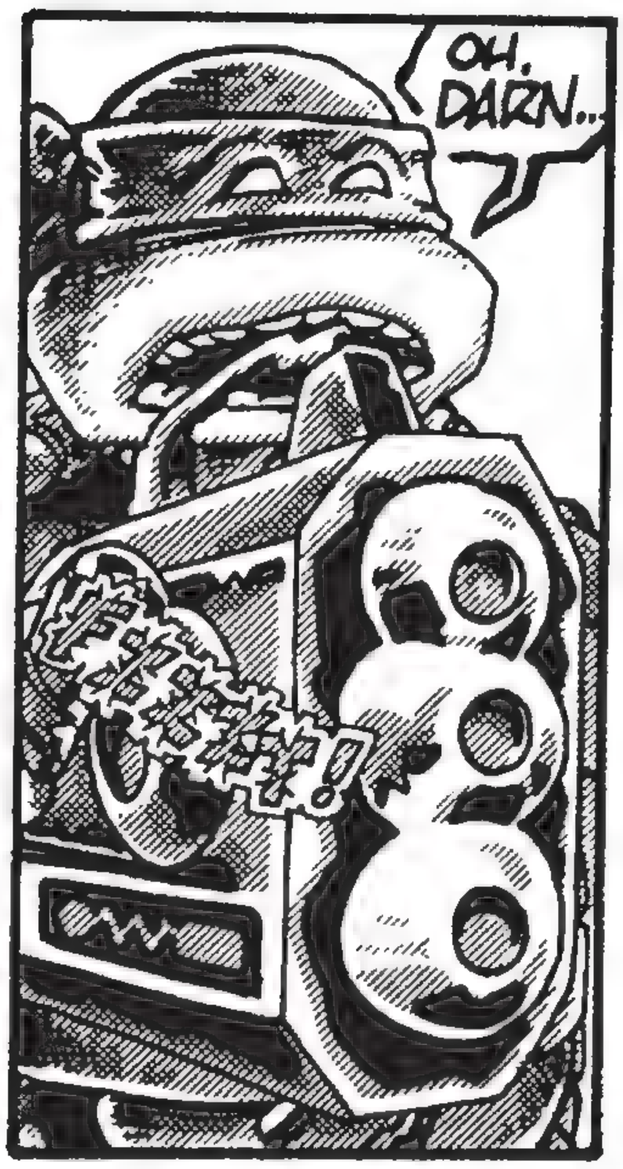
...HERE GOES NOTHING!

ALL RIGHT!! THAT WORKED GREAT!

UH, DON-- BOGIES AT NINE O'CLOCK--!


EAT NEGATIVE GRAVITY, YOU LOSERS!
YAHOO!




OH, DARN..
@#$%&*!

MAKES A GOOD CLUB, ANYWAY!

KIRBY! WE NEED SOME MORE HIGH-TECH BACK UP, MAN!

I GOT IT-- I GOT IT!

ADD A SIZE REFERENCE FOR SCALE... FINISH IT UP WITH A FEW DETAILS...

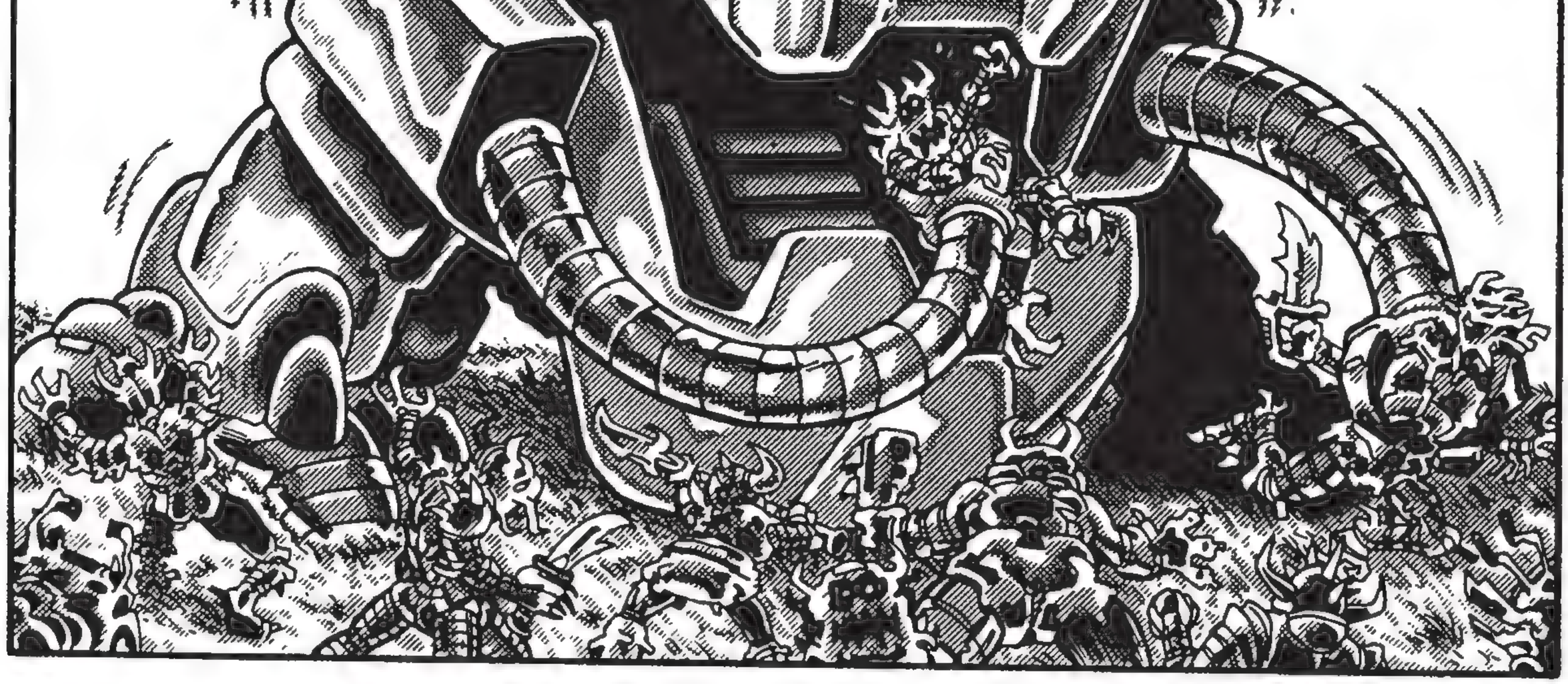
...AND VOILA!

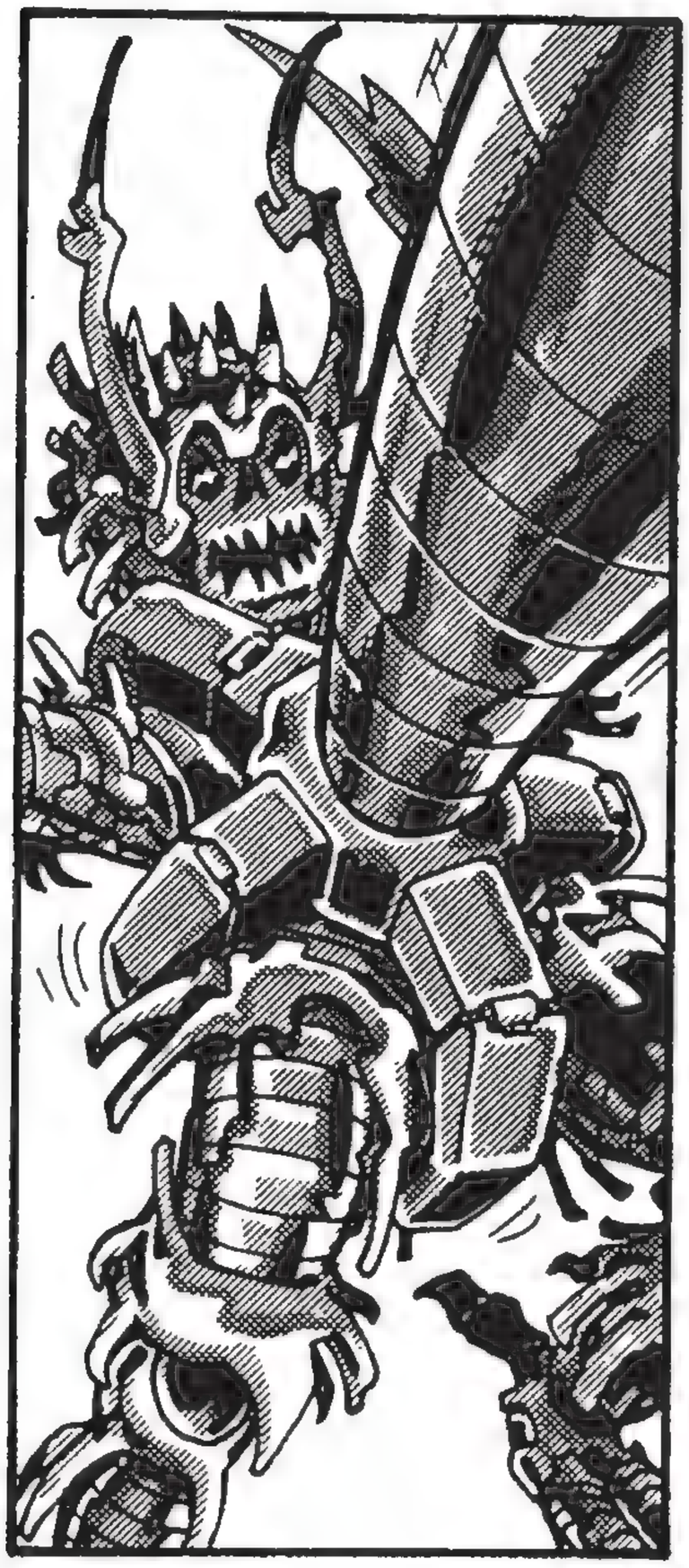
WHOA!

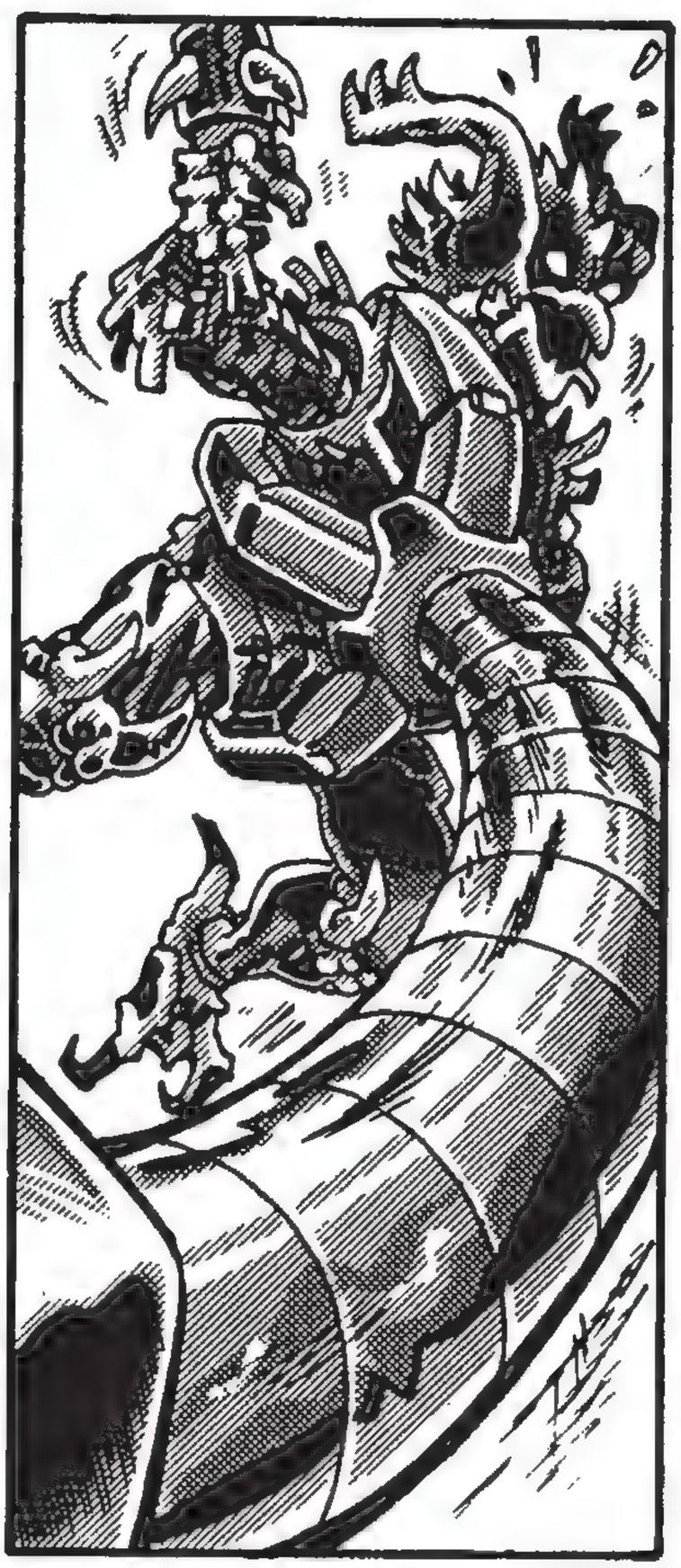
DARE I ASK...?!

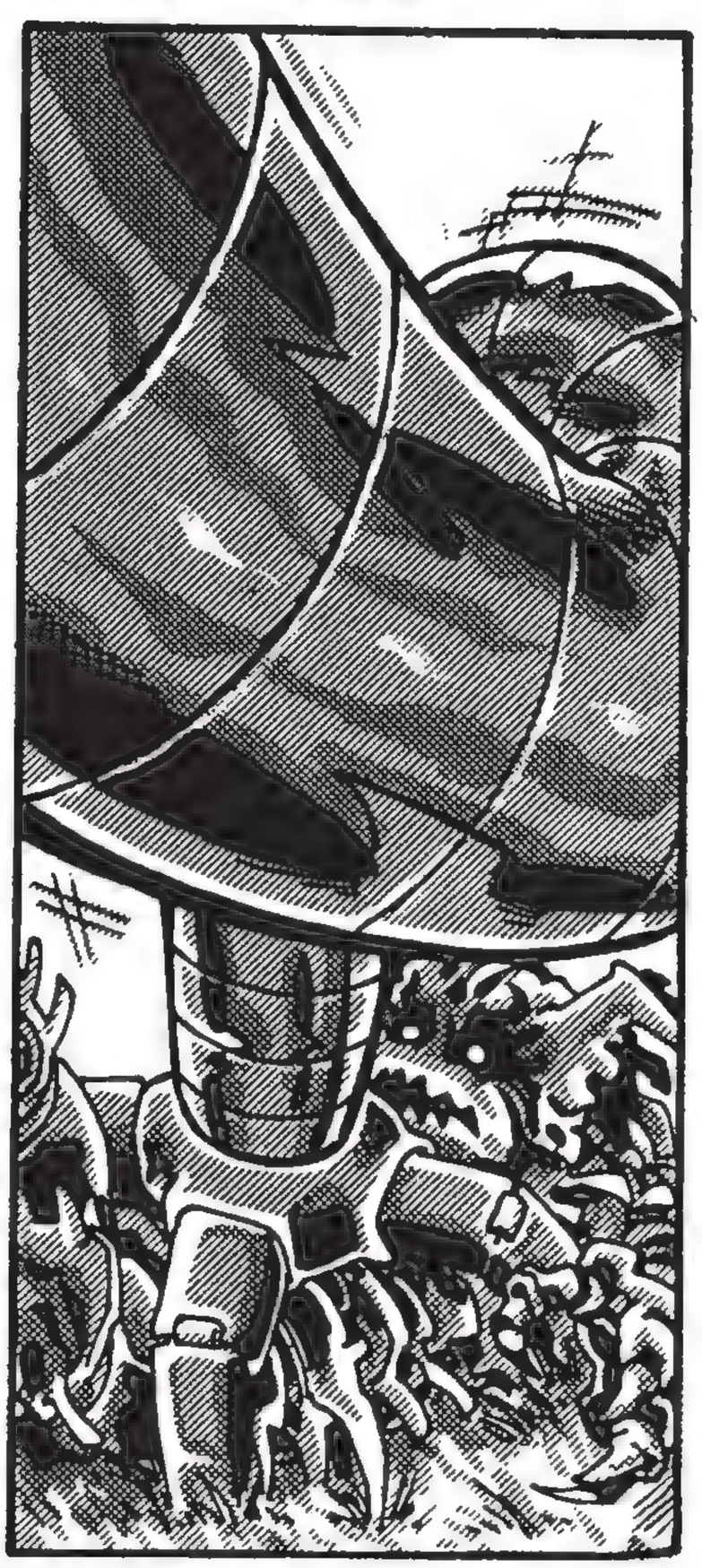
WELL, IT'S KIND OF A "MOBILE CREEP TRAPPER"-- IT RESPONDS TO MY BRAIN-WAVES, SEE...

HAH! NOT TOO SHABBY, PAL!









UH-OH -- IT'S FILLED UP--

NOW WHAT ?!

HANG ON... I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING!

BETTER BE SOON -- THOSE GUYS REALLY NEED HELP!

YOU'RE PRETTY SAFE UP HERE... SO WHILE YOU'RE DOING YOUR THING--

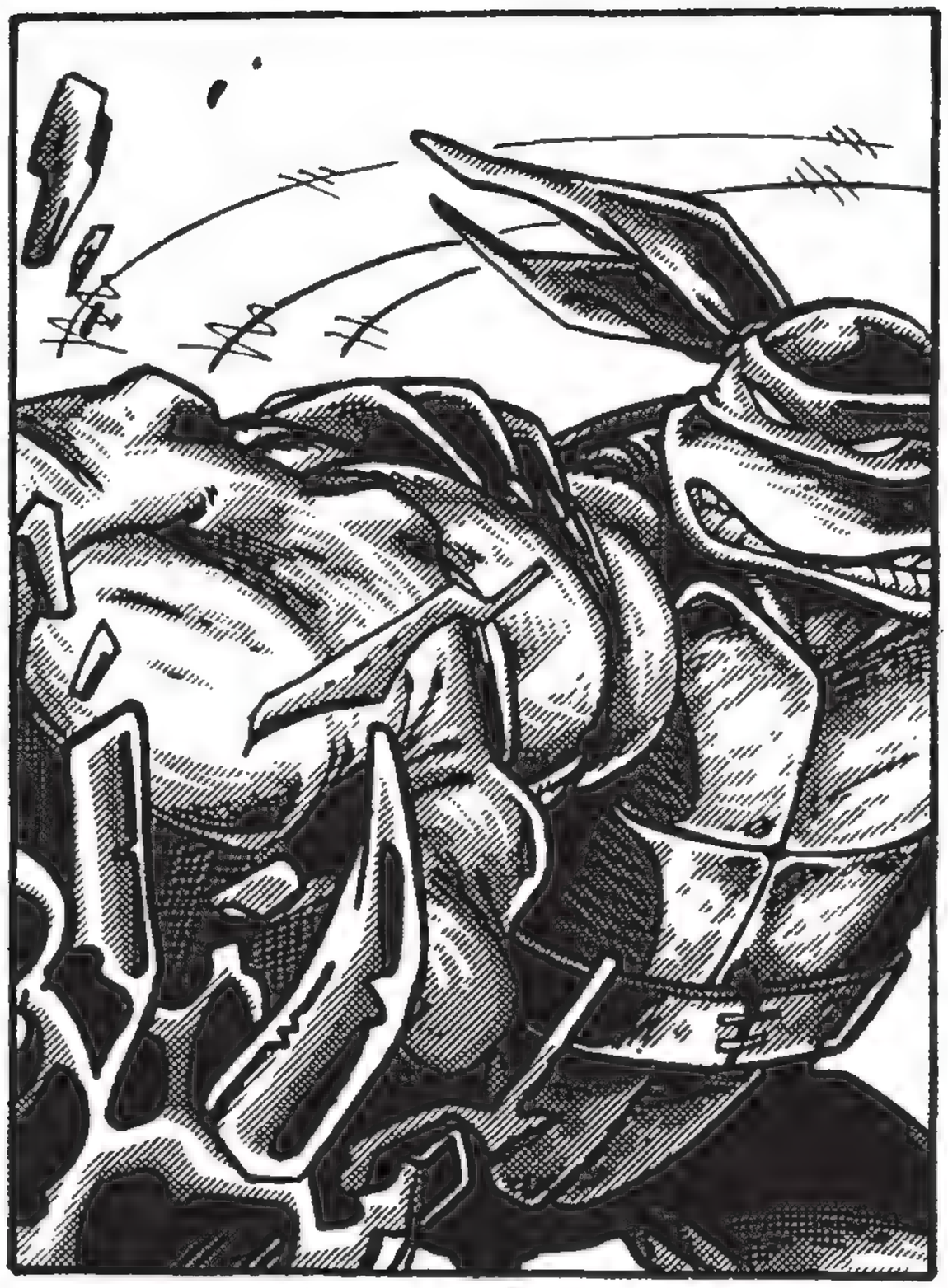
--I'LL DO MINE!

HAII!

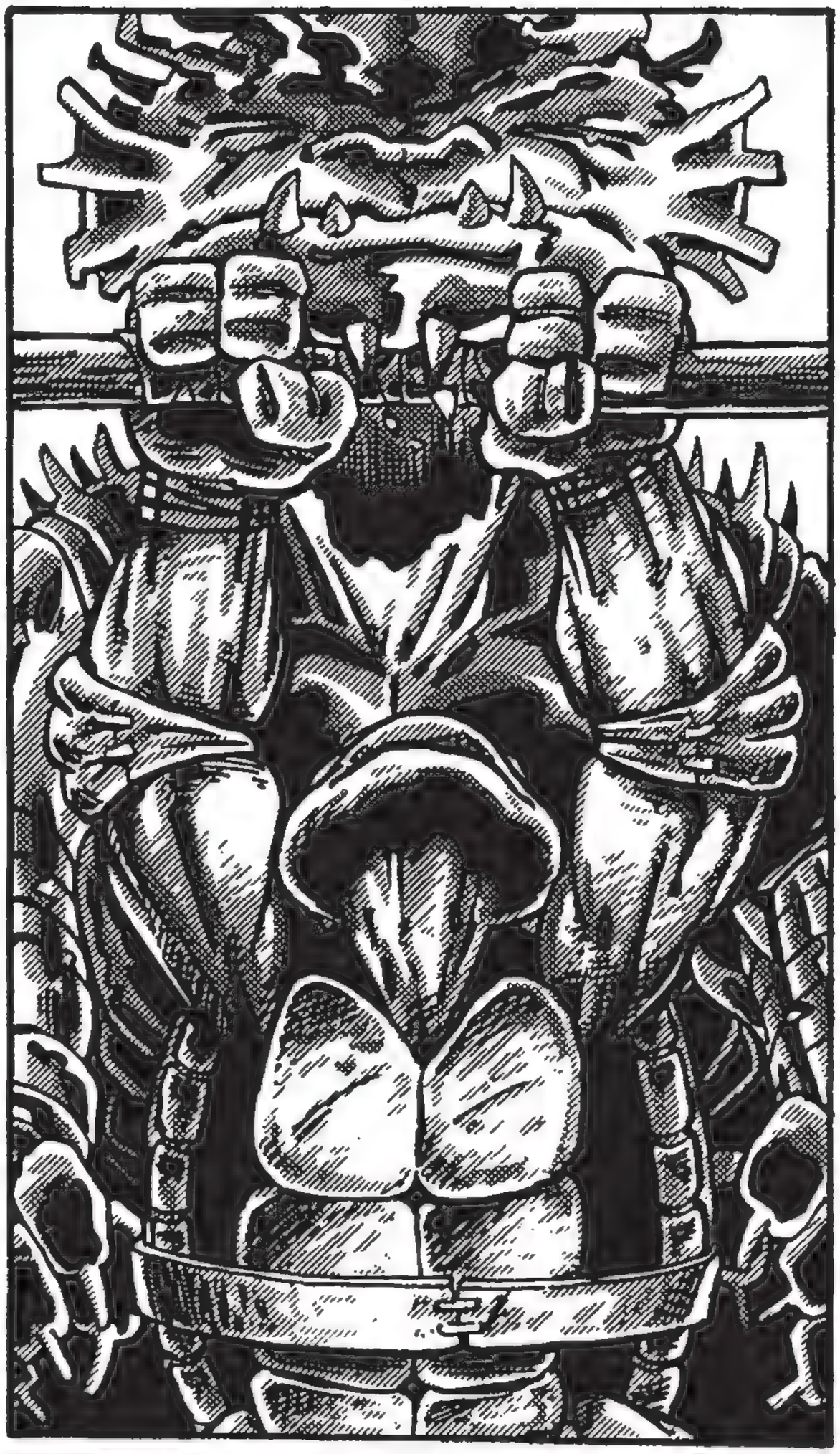
C'MON, THIS IS NOT TIME FOR "ARTIST'S BLOCK"! GOT TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING EFFECTIVE!

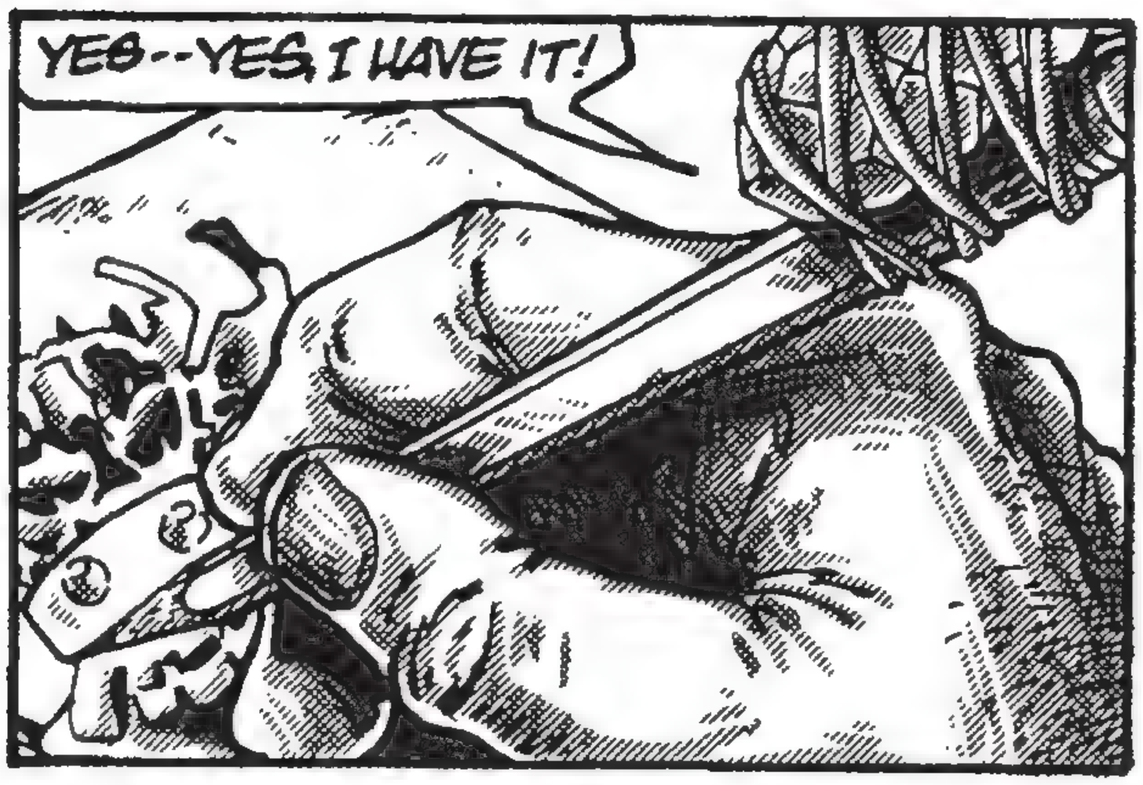
WHAT TO DO. WHAT TO DO..!

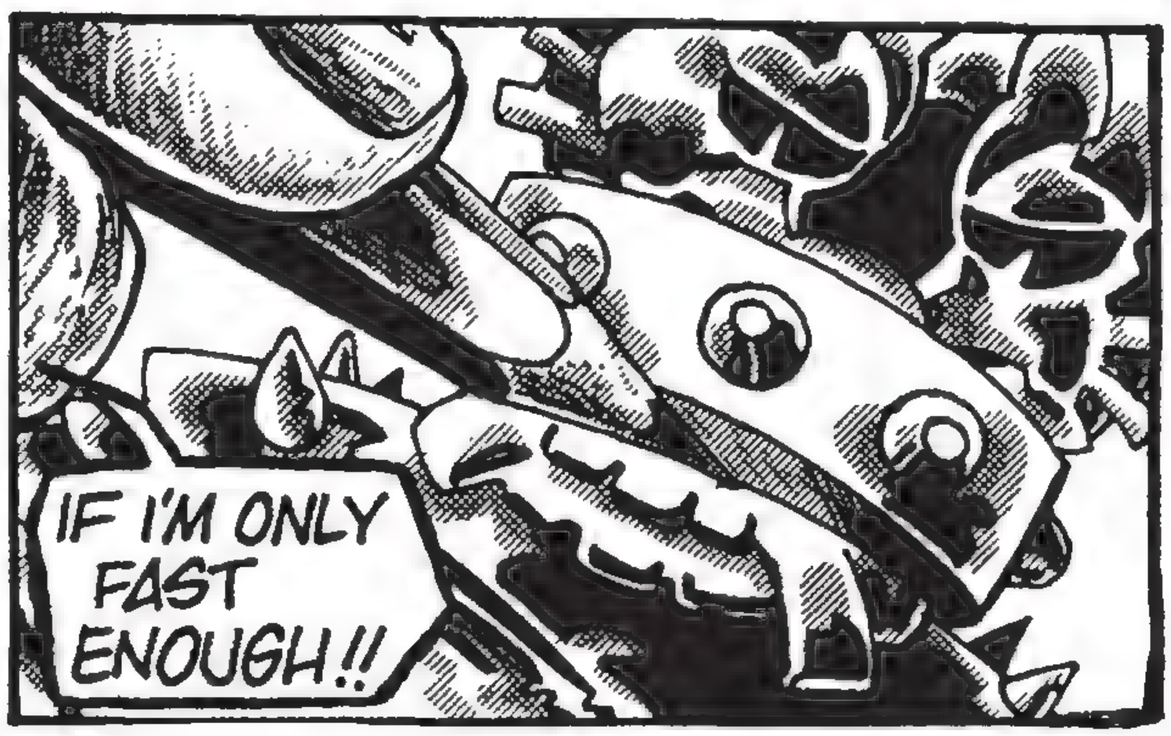
WAIT--



--IF ALL THESE GOONS ARE IN THIS SKETCHBOOK...




YES--YES, I HAVE IT!



IF I'M ONLY FAST ENOUGH!!

FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL MINUTES KIRBY'S HAND IS A BLUR...

...THE RESULT IS UNANIMOUS!!

THANK YOU MIGHTY SORCEROR! YOU ARE WELCOME IN OUR LAND-- AND HOMES-- ANYTIME!

WHEW! I THINK I'M GONNA HAVE BLISTERS ON MY DRAWING HAND!

GOOD WORK, KIRBY! BUT I THINK WE'D BETTER HEAD HOME...

YEAH... GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT... THIS PLACE IS PRETTY INTERESTING, THOUGH... WOULDN'T MIND EXPLORING A BIT!

HEY, WE CAN DO THAT ANOTHER DAY... HOW ABOUT SOME CHOW, NOW?

IF YOU'RE BUYIN', PAL... LET'S GO!

GEEZ! THE PORTAL--!

-IT'S SHRINKING-- AND FAST!

DON, YOU GO FIRST--

BUT-!

DON'T ARGUE! JUST GO!

OKAY... BUT WHEN I GET THROUGH--

--I'LL PULL YOU OUT!

UNGH! OH, NO...

I'M STUCK!

HANG IN THERE, DON-- I'LL GIVE YOU A PUSH!

UNH...!

OOF! THANKS, KIRBY! NOW...

OH, NO—!

--IT'S STILL SHRINKING--

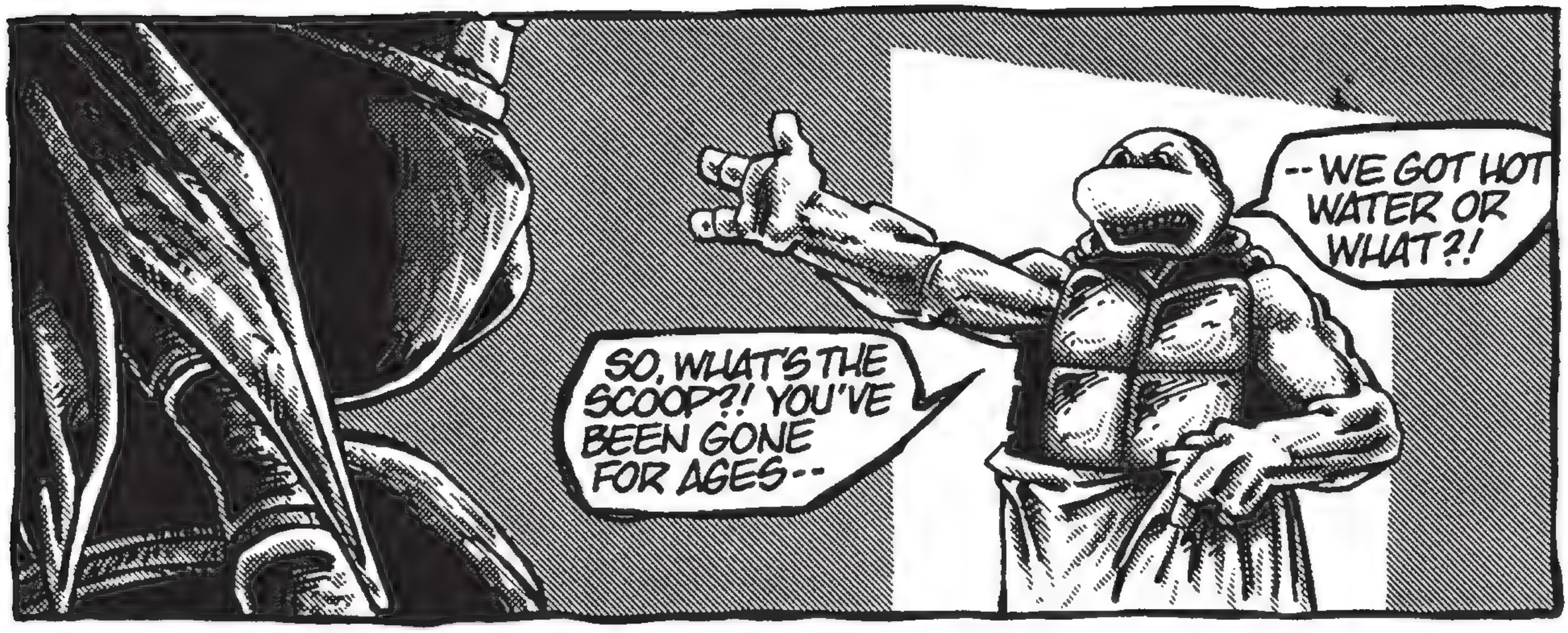
THE PORTAL—

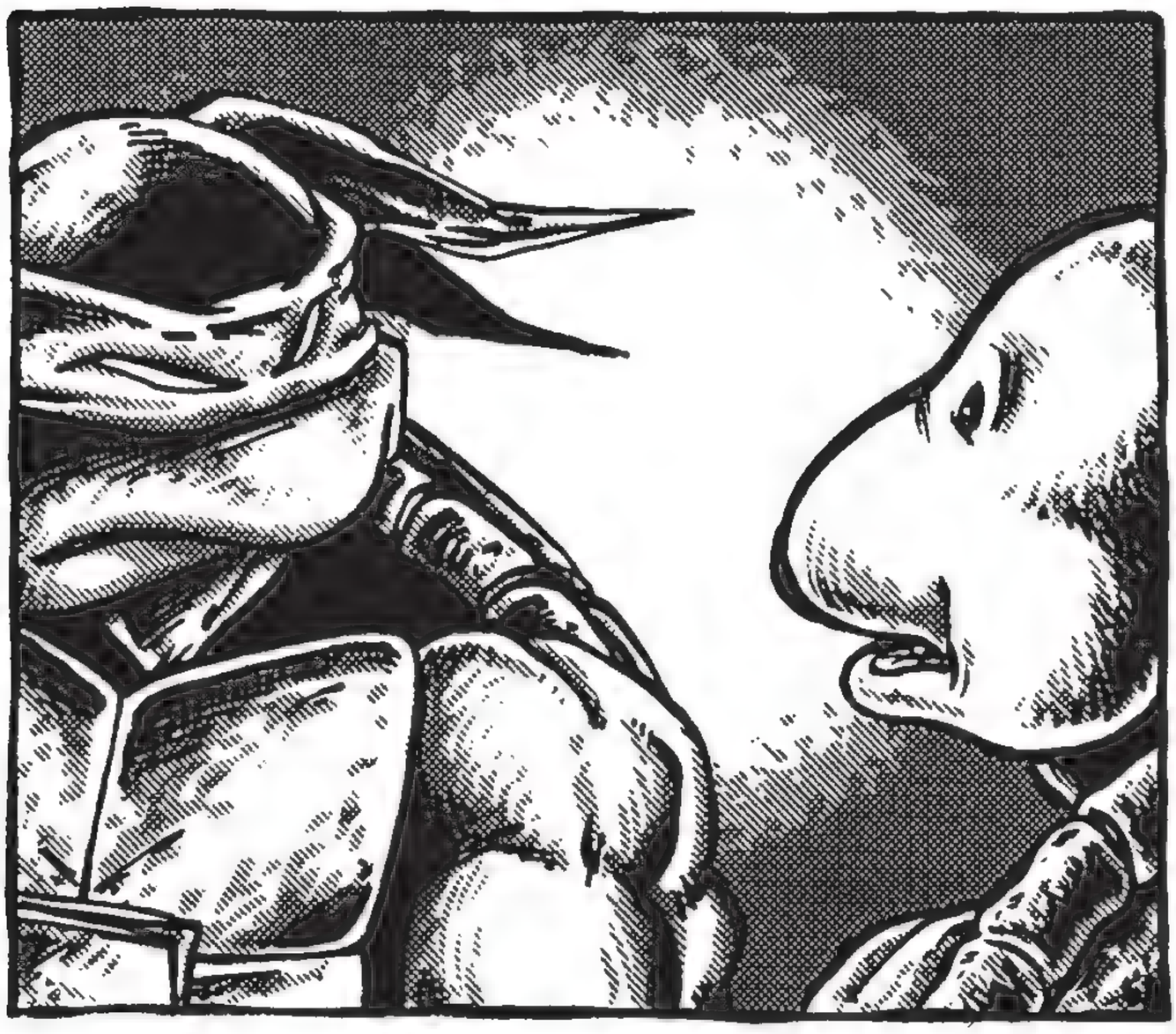
KIRBY!

GONE.

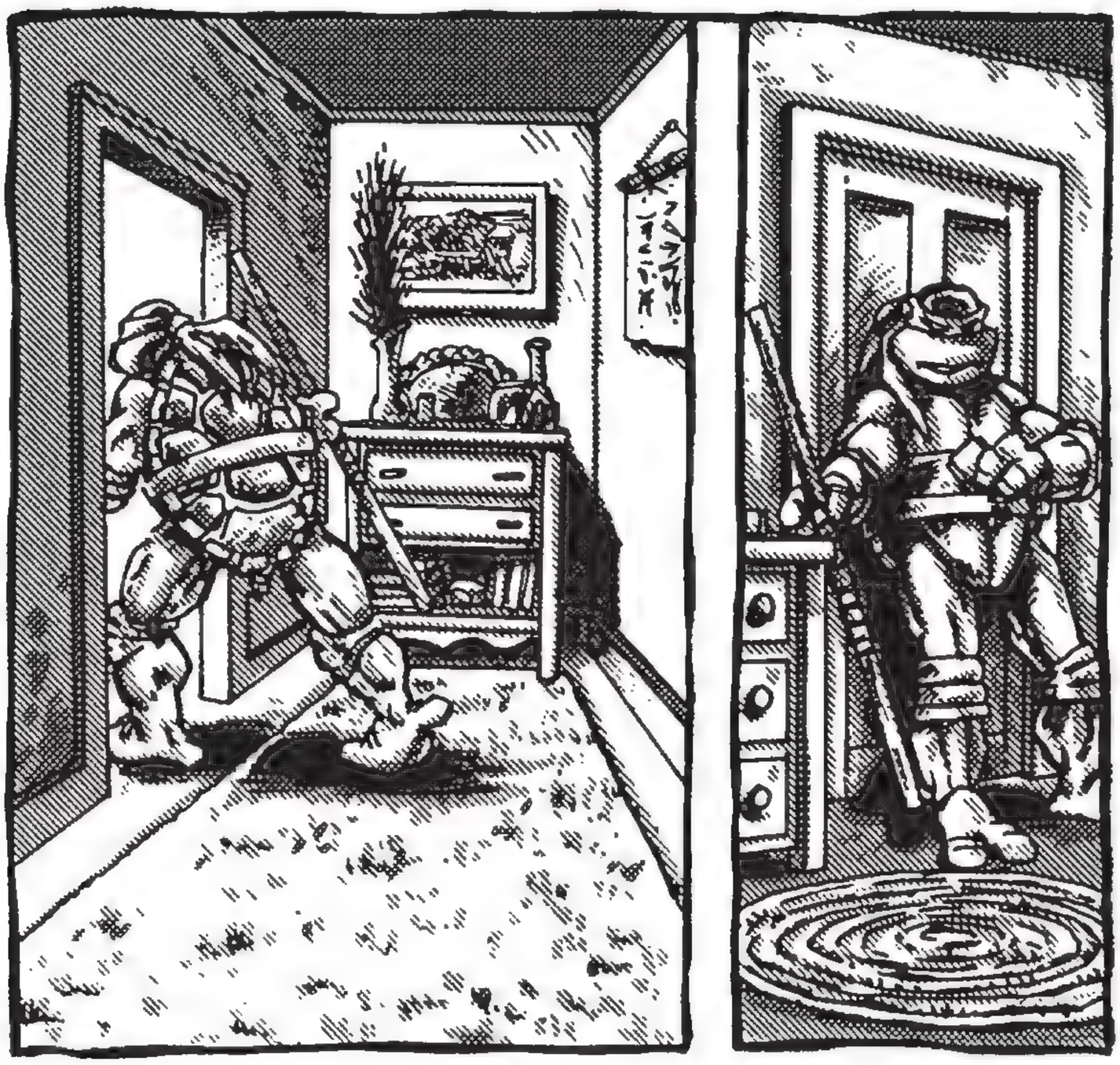
WHAT'S THIS...?

A NOTE...?


SO, WHAT'S THE SCOOP?! YOU'VE BEEN GONE FOR AGES--
--WE GOT HOT WATER OR WHAT?!



GEEZ, WHAT'S EATIN' HIM?



DON--
"LIFE AT BEST IS
BITTER SWEET"

TAKE
CARE OF
YOURSELF!

-KIRBY

THE END

ANNOTATIONS

KEVIN EASTMAN

This issue was pretty much Peter's brainchild from day one. Back in the early days we used to say that at times I acted like Raphael, as I tend to get passionate about things (and personally he's my favorite), and that Peter was a bit more like Donatello (his favorite back then), becaue he would be more level-headed and always willing to spend the time to think something out; to work through it scientifically, if you will.

But this went much deeper than just a cool story about Donatello; this was a story that featured our mutual real-life hero, a character based on Jack "King" Kirby. For those of you who don't know who he is, most comic creators put him on the same level (or above) as comic industry legends like Stan Lee—who had a hand in creating most of the known Marvel Universe.

Unfortunately, around that time the standard working relationship between the publishers, writers, and artists, especially in comics, was all work-for-hire—so all the creative work that was done while employed for a corporation like Marvel was considered owned by Marvel. Including all of the original artwork you created there as well...

Now, I'm not going to get into all the legal issues here, but around this time in the mid-'80s, sometime after many other artists were getting their original artwork back (a source of additional income on the collectors' market for artists, as most of the standard page rates, even for guys like Kirby, were pretty low), Jack was in the middle of a legal battle to get some of the 7,000+ pages he had done for Marvel returned to him—a case that was no doubt costing him a fortune.

So Pete decided we had to do something to help, and suggested that we should donate a chunk of the royalties from a special issue of TMNT and even work to get the okay to use Jack as one of the characters. Hell, all our inspiration came from guys like Jack Kirby—it just felt like it WAS the right thing to do.

At this point in our short careers we had been lucky enough to meet Jack, so Pete took point and asked the Kirby family if we could make a donation and use his likeness in a respectful way. Although they passed on the donation offer they said they were fine with us building a story around Jack—and Pete had one. He called it "Kirby and the Warp Crystal." It was awesome.

Even though Pete and I always shared the "Story and Art by" credits, this baby was all Pete's and he nailed it from concept to layouts, and delivered as solid a Kirby drawing impersonation as they come! This ride was sheer joy to be part of, and I could not have been happier strapping into the passenger seat and trying to keep up.

As you know (or should know by the time you read this), the story revolves around this character named "Kirby," who has rented out April's spare room near the basement. And when Donatello goes down to try and fix the water heater to keep his brothers from griping about it, he has a close encounter with a "Kirby Style" bat creature that flies off and seems to disappear through a brick wall.

Upon closer inspection, he spies on Kirby, who has a funky crystal taped to his pencil, and when he draws something with it, it comes to life—only to vanish after a few minutes—with the exception of a large framed mirror-like object… which is, in fact, a doorway to a secret world where all of Jack's drawings have come alive!

This was a serious no-brainer for a couple of die-hard Kirby fans like us. We always knew the things running around his head in any given day were real; worlds full of characters, gods, myths, monsters, and heroes, and would be the most incredible place to visit some day—so, with as much envy and bravado as we could muster, we tried our best to show what happens when Don and Kirby do.

My process for writing these annotations was to re-read each story a few times, make notes, and even dig around in my original file folders for funny behind-the-scenes "this-and-thats" but for this one, beyond what I explained and expanded on above, it feels like the story hits home exactly where it should, the beats don't need a lot more in-depth exploration, and the ending is as strong a statement today as I thought it was then.

ANNOTATIONS

PETER LAIRD

One thing I would like to point out is that, although this issue was more or less my "baby," as Kevin says here, there is one page which was inserted mostly because of a suggestion by Kevin which was right on the money.

That is page 95 (in this volume, page 9 in the original comic), in which Kirby explains the nature of the pencil with the magic crystal, and then demonstrates its power by allowing Donatello to try it out himself. Don draws a fairly crude stick figure, which subsequently comes to life and dances off the page, complete with weird cackling sound effects.

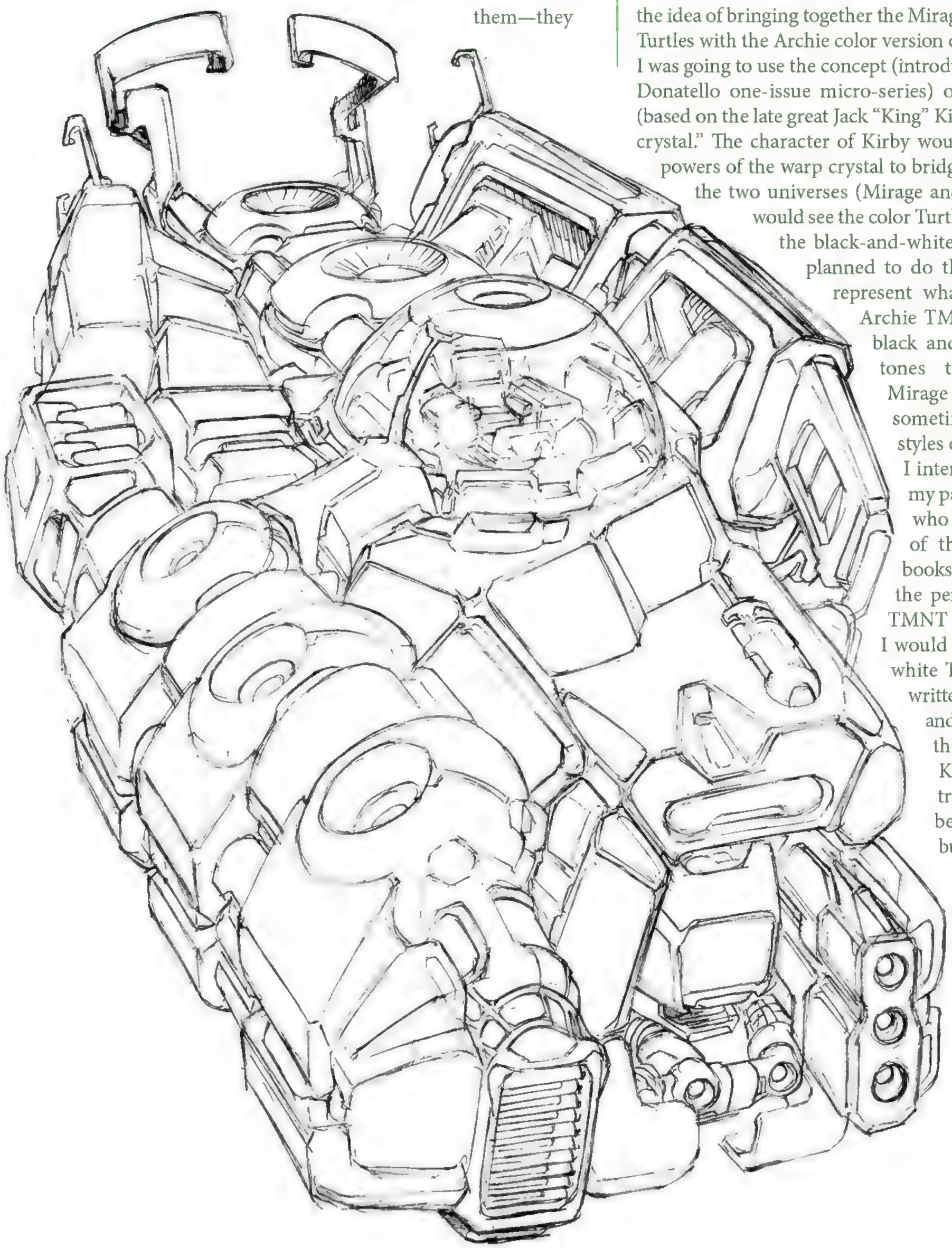
I can't recall precisely, but I am pretty sure Kevin laid out this page as well. His argument for including it was that it would help readers understand what was going on with this bizarre magic crystal if they actually SAW the process, and he was completely right.

The drawings of the stick figure still crack me up whenever I look at them—they so succinctly capture the energy and humor of Kevin's artwork—and personality—at that time.

Going through files a few years ago, I came across some stuff I had forgotten about. The most surprising thing was a stack of penciled layouts that I did for the *Donatello Micro-Series*. What was surprising to me was how detailed the layouts were—it was (and still is) very unusual for me to do more than really rough, sketchy drawings for my layouts, but these were almost complete, tight pencils. I think we could have just inked these layouts. But we didn't, instead following our typical practice of enlarging the layouts on a photocopier and light-tabling them onto the Graphix Duo-Shade board for final penciling, inking, and toning.

Also interesting were two preliminary drawings of the first page—I really don't know why I did them, as I did not do anything like this for any of the other pages.

All of this reminded me that some years later I had the idea of bringing together the Mirage black-and-white Turtles with the Archie color version of the TMNTs, and I was going to use the concept (introduced in the Mirage Donatello one-issue micro-series) of the artist Kirby (based on the late great Jack "King" Kirby) and his "warp crystal." The character of Kirby would use the cosmic powers of the warp crystal to bridge the gap between the two universes (Mirage and Archie), and we would see the color Turtles interacting with the black-and-white ones (literally—I planned to do the art in color to represent whatever was in the Archie TMNT universe, and black and white with grey tones to represent the Mirage TMNT universe, sometimes mixing the styles on the same page). I intended to work with my pal Ken Mitchroney, who had penciled many of the Archie TMNT books—he would handle the pencils on the color TMNT elements, whereas I would do the black-and-white TMNT stuff. I had written out a rough plot, and done the sketch to the left (of the ship Kirby creates to travel back and forth between universes), but the project never got off the ground, for a variety of reasons.



ROTATIONS

EASTMAN and LAIRD'S
DONATELLO: TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE

EASTMAN AND LAIRD'S

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

GUEST STARRING

CEREBUS

NO. 8
$1.50
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#8

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES AND CEREBUS THE AARDVARK

STORY AND ART
KEVIN EASTMAN PETER LAIRD
DAVE SIM AND GERHARD
LETTERING AND
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
STEVE LAVIGNE

CEREBUS © DAVE SIM 1985

OOH, I'M GONNA BE IN TROUBLE -- I JUST KNOW IT! OH GEEZ!

IF HE CATCHES ME IN HIS PRIVATE CHAMBERS, HE'LL KILL ME... LIKE DEAD!

OOH, I CAN'T GO THROUGH WITH IT!

NO, WAIT--I'VE GOT IT! IF HE COMES IN RIGHT NOW, I'LL JUST SAY "FORGIVE ME, LORD SIMULTANEOUS, I HEARD A STRANGE NOISE, AND--" ... NO ... THAT WON'T WORK ... HOW ABOUT, "I SAW THIS HUGE GROSS ICKY DEMON RUN IN HERE, AND I THOUGHT ONLY TO PROTECT YOU, YOUR HIGHNESS." YEAH, THATS THE TICKET!

OH, GET REAL, RENET! YOU CAN'T LET THAT OLD FOSSIL RUN YOUR LIFE FOREVER!

I MEAN, I DIDN'T EVEN WANT THIS APPRENTICE TIMESTRESS JOB-- MOM AND DAD MADE ME TAKE IT, TO LEARN LIKE RESPONSIBILITY AND STUFF...

BUT PROBABLY THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS THING I'VE LEARNED..

...IS THAT MY PASSPORT FOR TRAVEL TO ANY PLACE AND TIME IS DOWN AT THE OTHER END OF THIS HALL!

OOH, I'LL BE KILLED FORSURE-- I KNOW IT!

OH GEEZ, OH GOD! HERE WE GO, BABE-- NO GUTS, NO GLORY!

AND THERE IT IS -- THE SCEPTRE THAT CONTAINS THE SACRED SANDS OF TIME! OLD SIMULTANEOUS SAID THAT WHOEVER HOLDS THE SCEPTRE--

-- HAS THE POWER TO JOURNEY TO ANY TIME AND PLACE IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSES-- JUST BY WISHING IT!

OOH WOW! AND ALL I HAVE TO DO IS... IS...

...TAKE IT!

RENET!

POOP!

2

OH WOW OH GOD OH GEEZ--! L-L-LORD S-SIMULTANEOUS--!!

REPLACE MY SCEPTRE, YOU BRAT!!!

W-WAIT, MASTER-- P-PLEASE! I-IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK! G-SEE, I SAW A BIG DEMON, AN'-- WHOOPS!

OOH--!

BOMP

HMMPH! A LIAR, A THIEF-- AND A KLUTZ! I'LL HAVE YOUR HEAD, YOU VIXEN!

N-NO! PLEASE--! PLEASE, SCEPTRE-- --TAKE ME AWAY, ANYWHERE, NOW!

FIZZZT

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE!

I NEED A PLACE...

OH! UMM... AH, NEW YORK? I LOVE NEW YORK! THAT'S WHERE I WANT TO GO!

STOP! I, SIMULTANEOUS, LORD OF TIME, COMMAND YOU TO STOP!

I NEED A DATE...

HUH? WELL, I COULD PROBABLY FIX YOU UP WITH A CUTE WALKING STICK--

A YEAR, STUPID!

OH! UH-- UM OH, GEEZ--

19--AH--

1986

DRIP

DOINK

HUNRRRAH EH?

NAPTIME'S OVER, BUDDY--!

OH, NO...

SPLASH

AARRGH! I'LL GETCHA FOR THAT MIKE! GRRR--

AH, HAH, HAH, HAH! C'MON, RAPH-- EXERCISE TIME! LEO WANTS YOU ON THE ROOF IN FIVE MINUTES!

GRUMBLE GRUMBLE

TEN MINUTES LATER

WHERE'S RAPHAEL?

LATE AS USUAL!

I TOLD HIM TO GET UP HERE, LEO--

MIKE! HEY, COME HELP ME WITH THIS EQUIPMENT--!

EQUIPMENT?

WHAT KIND OF EQUIP-- OHH, NOOO--!

MIKE, OL' PAL-- GLAD TA SEE YA! HA, HA, HA HA HA HA!

GLOOB!!!

FOOSSSH!

AH HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

RAPHAEL, YOU CREEP!

GLUB!!!

SPLASH

ZZZZZZZZZ

HA,HAH. HA,HA,HAH HEE,HEE! YOU-HA--YOU GUYS LOOK SO FUNNY--

HUH?

CRACKLE

ZZZZ

CRACK

WHAT IS THAT!?

OH, WOW!

OW!

BLIP

LOOKOUT!

OOF!

UGH!

AAAAH!

W-WHAT ARE-Y-YOU?!

AH, DONATELLO-- AH--I'M A--AH NINJA TURTLE. WHO ARE YOU--?!

OH,--NICE TA MEETCHA!

HEY, WAIT A MINUTE! ISN'T THIS SUPPOSED TO BE NEW YORK IN THE YEAR, 1986?

AH... YEAH--

--IT IS!

SO?

UM--I'M RENET!

UMFP! LET ME UP!

OOH, I HATE THIS HAT--!

OKAY, BUT I DON'T GET IT-- AREN'T THERE SUPPOSED TO BE, LIKE, REAL... UM... PEOPLE-- Y'KNOW, LIKE ME-- AT THIS TIME? I MEAN-- DOES EVERYONE ELSE HERE LOOK LIKE YOU?

OH, NO-- MOST EVERYBODY HERE LOOKS LIKE YOU... SORT OF. WE'RE KIND OF... AH... SPECIAL!

YEAH, SPECIAL!

WHATTA BABE!

NO KIDDING? LIKE, THIS REALLY IS THE "BIG APPLE" CIRCA 1986? SWEAR TO GOD? FORSURE?

YOU BET!

OOH, WICKED COOL! I'VE GOT TO HAVE A CLOSER LOOK!

OH, YEAH!

THIS IS TOO WILD! LIKE, THIS IS REALLY IT! THE CITY OF LIGHTS AND LOVE! SUBWAYS AND SUSHI BARS!

I'M REALLY GONNA LOVE IT HERE!

HEY--WHATS WITH THE SKY?

IT'S LIGHTING UP AGAIN-- RIGHT ABOVE US!

OOH, NOO! HE'S FOUND ME!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

WHO'S FOUND YOU, RENET? A FRIEND OF YOURS?

NO--NOT A FRIEND-- MY MASTER--

--LORD SIMULTANEOUS!

RENET!!!

GURK!

OMPF!

BOING BUMP

THE SCEPTRE--! IT'S MY ONLY HOPE--!

P-PLEASE-- YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME!

H-HE'S GONNA KILL ME!

OK, OK--! DON'T WORRY, YOU'RE SAFE!

WE'LL PROTECT YOU!

HERE'S THE STAFF YOU DROPPED, RENET!

BEGONE, YOU PINHEADED MORTAL FREAKS! THE GIRL IS MINE!

LEAVE NOW! -- OR I'LL FRY ALL OF YOU WHERE YOU STAND!

FREAKS, HUH?! C'MON DOWN HERE, CHROME DOME, AND WE'LL SHOW YOU WHATS WHAT!!!

OH, GEEZ--! THANK GOD I HAVE THE SCEPTRE-- I'LL USE IT TO BOP OUT OF HERE! BUT I CAN'T LEAVE THOSE FOUR LITTLE GUYS HERE-- SIMULTANEOUS WILL ZAP 'EM!

SCEPTRE, TAKE ALL FIVE OF US AWAY-- NOW!

I NEED A PLACE...

10

STOP! DESIST!

DO NOT USE THE... SCEPTRE...

OH, DAMN!

TAKE US TO A PLACE-- ANYPLACE ON THIS EARTH BEFORE HUMANS RECORDED TIME!

11

UH... AHEM!

OKAY, NOW I KNOW TODAY IS TUESDAY, BUT WHAT YEAR IS IT?

HMM... I DON'T THINK WE RECORD THAT YET.*

* YES WE DO -- IT'S 1406 - Tarim

AHEM!

COUGH! COUGH!

GOTTA HAVE AH WORD WORD WITH YA, SIR!

THATS ONE BAD-LOOKING FORTRESS, EH?

GIVES ME GOOSE BUMPS!

CEREBUS *DISTINCTLY* REMEMBERS TELLING YOU NOT TO WAKE HIM UP UNTIL *SUNDOWN* ...

THIS *BETTER* BE GOOD ...

12

EH, WELL... AH... TH' LADS AN', I 'AVE BEEN... AH... THINKIN OVER THE WHOLE BLOODY... AH... DEAL... AN'... AH...

GO ON.

I MEAN, WHEN YOU SAID "IT'LL BE LIKE STEALIN' THE NOSE OFF A LEPER", WE... AH... DIDN'T EXPECT TO... AH... ENCOUNTER A FORTRESS OF SUCH... ER... MAGNITUDE!

UH HUH

ANY 'OW... AH... WHAT I'M TRYIN' TA SAY IS... UM... WELL... WE'RE HITTIN' THE ROAD... TAKIN' A POWDER... LEAVIN, YA KNOW?

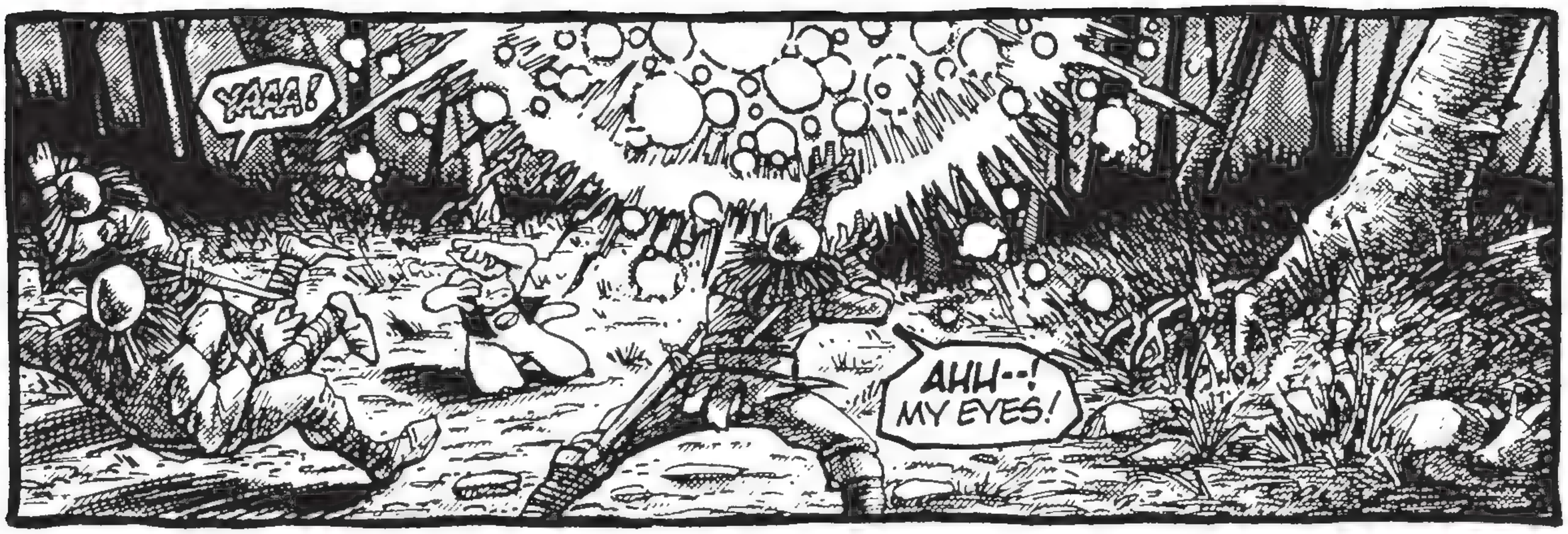
CEREBUS THINKS THAT MIGHT PROVE DIFFICULT...

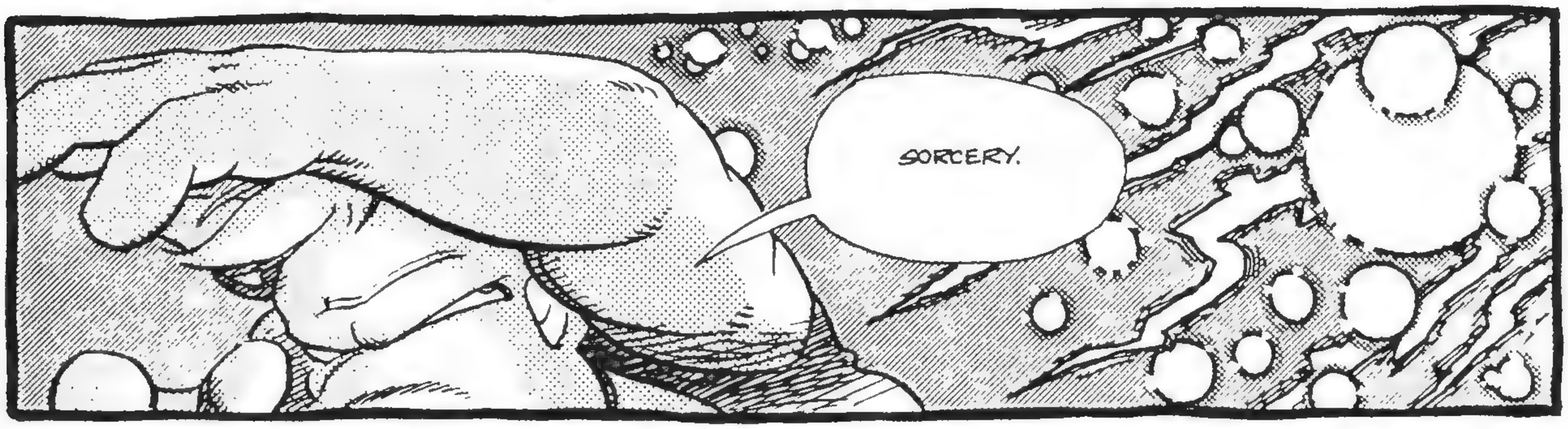
WITH NOTHING BUT *BONE FRAGMENTS* HOLDING YOUR KNEES AND ANKLES TOGETHER

YA KNOW?

SUNDOWN

DON'T FORGET OR CEREBUS WILL...


YAAA!
AHH--! MY EYES!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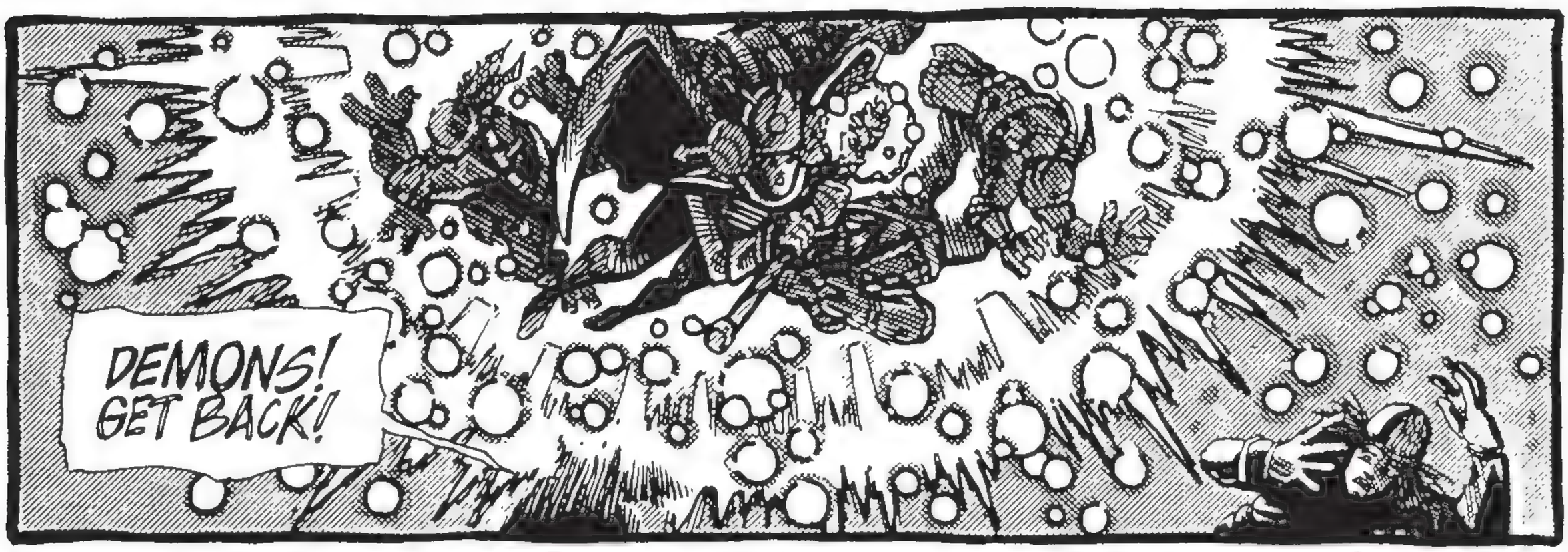

DEMONS! GET BACK!

EEYOOWWOWWOOWOWW!!!!
19

WITHIN THE CASTLE...

IT'S HERE! IT'S HERE!

URRNNK...

WHAT HAPPENED?!

WHERE ARE WE?

EEEKKK!!! A DEMON!

OH, GEEZ--!

THE SCEPTRE--! IT'S HERE!!

GURR...? WHAT!?!

OH, WOW-- MORE "SPECIAL CREATURES! I HOPE WE DIDN'T HURT YOU!

DEMONS AND A WITCH!!

UH OH, ONE OF THOSE GUYS WE LANDED ON IS GOING FOR HIS SWORD-- COULD BE TROUBLE!

ARE YOU CRAZY?! "THE SCEPTRE" -- THE ONE THAT CONTAINS THE SACRED BANDS OF TIME? IT'S HERE, IN THIS DIMENSION -- NOW?!

YES! IT IS TRUE-- SEARCH YOUR MIND... FEEL THE POWER... THE FORCE...

TAKE IT EASY, FRIEND! WE'RE SORRY WE FELL ON TOP OF YOU -- BUT IT WASN'T ON PURPOSE, BELIEVE ME!

IT'S A LITTLE LATE FOR APOLOGIES ASPARAGUS-FACE...

LET'S SEE IF YOU KNOW HOW TO USE THAT THING...

YYESSSSS-- I FEEL ITS PRESENCE SO STRONG!

IT MUST BE HERE, AND CLOSE BY! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

AFTER ALL THESE AGES-- IT'S WITH-IN MY REACH!

RIGHT OVER--

TINK

--THERE!

AT THE EDGE OF THE WOODS!

CAPTAIN! HAVE TWENTY OF YOUR BEST MEN MOUNTED AT ATTACK READY IN FOUR SECONDS! MOVE IT!

HEY, YOU GUYS-- CHILL OUT! NO NEED TO FIGHT-- I CAN EXPLAIN EVERYTHING!

Y'SEE, BACK IN THE 79TH LEVEL OF THE DIMENSION OF NULL-TIME, I WAS, LIKE TOTALLY TIRED OF MY DULL, BORING, LIFE AS APPRENTICE TO LORD SIMULTANEOUS, MASTER OF TIME... SO I DECIDED TO BLAH, BLAH BLAH...

RIDE HARD, WARRIORS-- RIDE FAST! HEAD STRAIGHT FOR THE TREELINE TO THE NORTH... AND MAY YOUR GODS HAVE MERCY ON ANY STRAGGLERS-- FOR I WILL NOT!

SO WHEN OLD LORD SIMULTANEOUS APPEARED IN NEW YORK, I WAS JUST SO SURE HE'D KILL US ALL, REAL SLOW AND HORRIBLE-- SO I USED THIS SCEPTRE TO POP US OFF TO HERE!

ANYWAY, THIS PLACE IS PRETTY GROSS... SO I'LL JUST HAVE THE SCEPTRE TAKE US AWAY TO SOME NICE PLACE, REAL SOON! OKAY?

LOOK-- CEREBUS HAS A FORTRESS TO BREAK INTO, SO WHY DON'T YOU TAKE YOUR FRIENDS HERE AND GET WHEREVER YOU ...

...HORSES.

SCATTER!

SURROUND THEM! CUT THEM OFF!

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE, CAPTAIN--

I'LL HANDLE THIS-

MY SPECIAL WAY!

ZZZZ

WHUMP

FUMP

BLUMP

BOMPH

THIS WAS FAR TOO EASY--THE SCEPTRE, IF WEILDED BY AN ADEPT--

--HAS THE POWER TO DISSIPATE ALL MY MAGICKS--AND MORE!

HMM...

E-EXCUSE ME, MASTER SAVINI--BUT THE TRESPASSERS STILL LIVE... MORE OR LESS! SHALL WE--?

NO... THEIR POWER IS SHORN... THEY ARE NO THREAT TO ME!

NOW... WHERE IS... AHA!

AT LAST... AT LAST, IT'S MINE!!!

THE SCEPTRE OF THE SANDS OF TIME--ONE OF THE GREATEST POWER OBJECTS IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSES--!

--AND I HAVE IT!

HA HAH HA HA HAH AH! WITH THIS FORCE IN MY HANDS--WHAT CAN'T I DO?!!

TROOPS--BACK TO THE CASTLE!

--AND PREPARE YOURSELVES TO SERVE THE NEW MASTER OF THE WORLD!

SHORTLY...

W-WHAT... HIT US...?

OOOOH...

MUTHER--

IS EVERYONE OKAY?

OH.NO!

--THE SCEPTRE!

THE SCEPTRE IS GONE!

THAT GROSS HAIRY GUY MUST HAVE TAKEN IT!

A-AND... WITHOUT THE SANDS OF TIME, WE'LL BE STUCK HERE-- LIKE, FOREVER!!!

WHAT--!? ARE YOU SERIOUS!!? WITHOUT YOUR MAGIC WAND WE CAN'T GO HOME?!

LOOK-- I'M REALLY SORRY--

OH, GREAT!

--JUST GREAT! GREAT! JUST FINE AND DANDY! URR... HOW DO WE GET INTO THESE THINGS?! WHAT A MESS!

SORRY, SORRY, SORRY--

WELL, WE HAVE NO CHOICE-- WE'LL HAVE TO GET THE SCEPTRE BACK...

OR STAY HERE FOREVER! GACK!

BUT JUST LOOK AT THAT PLACE, LEO-- WE'D NEED AN ARMY TO PUT A DENT IN IT!

A-HEM.

CEREBUS KNOWS WHERE WE CAN TRADE SOME OF THE WITCH'S JEWELRY FOR MERCENARIES

YOU GET YOUR SCEPTRE

AND CEREBUS GETS HIS TREASURE ...

DEAL?

A FEW HOURS LATER.

PHEWW! THIS PLACE SMELLS GROSS!

UT-OH, I THINK YOU SAT IN SOME PUKE, RENET...

OH, GROSS!

HA, HA, HA! JUST KIDDING!

SSSHHH! HOLD IT DOWN, GEEZ! I WISH THAT CEREBUS GUY WOULD HURRY UP, THESE PEOPLE ARE GIVING ME THE CREEPS!

CHETS TAVERN

BEER WINES

ARMOURER

21

WHERE'D HE GO ANYWAY?

OH THIS IS SO GREAT-- I LOVE BARS! GIGGLE!

WARM BEER IS MY ALL TIME FAVORITE DRINK-- HOW 'BOUT YOU?

I SEE HIM-- HE'S OVER BY THE WINDOW TALKING TO SOME GOONS!

I WONDER WHAT THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT? IT BETTER CONCERN GETTING INTO THAT CASTLE!

ZO... 'OW MUCH FER DE GIRL YOU COME HERE WITH, EH?

NO WAY. THE LAST TIME CEREBUS SOLD SOMEONE A WITCH, HE SPENT SIX MONTHS EATING FLIES ON A LILY PAD...

W-WITCH?!

DO YOU THINK WE CAN TRUST HIM, LEO?

NO...

I KNEW IT WOULD COME TO THIS, EH...

TOLD YA DIDN'T I? RIGHT FROM THE START!

OH, TAKE OFF YOU KNOB! YEP, THE MINUTE I LET THAT LITTLE GRAY FURRY GUY IN HERE LAST MONTH, I KNEW SOONER OR LATER HE'D START BRING-ING HIS FRIENDS IN!

TOLD YA DIDN'T I? RIGHT FROM THE START--

OOH, THE BEACH! I JUST LIKE, LOVE THE BEACH! I MEAN, I'VE NEVER BEEN TO ONE, BUT I KNOW IT WOULD BE SOOO WILD! I KNOW I'D LOVE IT! TEE, HEE! CAN I HAVE ANOTHER BEER?

OH, RENET-- PLEASE! JUST PASSOUT OR SOMETHING! YAK, YAK, YAK YAK!

HEY-- HERE HE COMES, GUYS!

HEY--HAVE YOU SEEN MY HAT?

WHAT'S UP, CEREBUS? WHY'D THOSE MEN YOU WERE TALKING TO GO RUNNING OUT THE DOOR?

WHAT DID YOU SAY TO THEM? WILL THEY HELP US ATTACK THE FORT? WHAT ABOUT--

STOP SWEATING IN YOUR ALE-- IT MAKES IT *TASTE* FUNNY

CEREBUS HAS THE ARMY WE NEED...

OH, YEAH? HOW DID YOU DO THAT?

EASY ...

CEREBUS TOLD THEM THE GIRL IS MYRTLE, QUEEN OF THE MYSTIC T'CAPMIN TORTOISES AND ONCE EVERY HUNDRED YEARS SHE GRANTS AN ARMY *INVULNERABILITY* FROM SUNUP TO SUNDOWN

CEREBUS TOLD THEM *THEY* WERE THE LUCKY ARMY THIS TIME AND THAT THEY SHOULD ATTACK THE FORTRESS TOMORROW AND STEAL ALL OF THE *SORCERER'S* GOLD

HAHAHAHAHAHA HAHAHAHAHAHA HAHAHAHAHAHA

JOKE RIGHT?

AYE-- BE AT THE EDGE OF THE CLEARING *BEHIND* THE FORTRESS AT *SUN-UP*

AND WE'LL *SEE* HOW *FUNNY* IT IS...

MAYBE CEREBUS DOESN'T *HAVE* TO STEAL THE STUPID SCROLLS... CEREBUS IS *MILES* FROM THAT *DAMN* WIZARD...

HIS *POWER* COULDN'T *POSSIBLY* WORK AT THIS DISTANCE..... COULDN'T *POSSIBLY*

CEREBUS WILL JUST *UP* AND *LEAVE*...

AYE!

THAT'S IT. CEREBUS WILL JUST UP AND...

HEY, MISTER CEREBUS— LET'S GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD, HUH?

SHHH!

OH, GEEZ...

RENET, BE QUIET!

MAYBE WE COULD LEAVE HER HERE?

OKAY OKAY

WHAT'D I DO?

DAMN WIZARDS

RENET, PLEASE!!! THIS IS A SNEAK ATTACK-- WE DON'T WANT THEM TO HEAR US! GET IT?!

OH, GEEZ! YOU'RE RIGHT! SORRY...

UM... SO WHAT'S NEXT...?

WE WAIT FOR A *MESSENGER* TO TELL US WHEN OUR *JOKE* HAS STARTED...

ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE FOR-TRESS.

WE'RE ALL SET-- BY NOW, THE MESSENGER SHOULD HAVE TOLD CEREBUS AND HIS ASSASSINS, TO ATTACK!

GET READY, MEN!

OH, ALL THAT GOLD! BEAUTIFUL, BEAUTIFUL GOLD--! JUST WAITING FOR ME!

WITH THE WITCH'S SPELLS OF INVULNERABILITY, WE'LL BE UNSTOPPABLE!

YEAH!

YEAH!

LET'S MOVE OUT !!!

WE BAD!

GRRRR!

GET'EM!

YEAH, YEAH!

BACK ON THE OTHER SIDE...

SHH... SOME-ONES COMING!

COULD BE A PATROL FROM THE CASTLE--!

OH, YEAH?

YAA!

RAPHAEL, WAIT--! IT COULD BE THE...

...THE... MESSENGER...

UH... HEY... IT WAS THE MESSENGER! HEH... GUESS THAT MEANS WE'RE READY TO GO, HUH?

IT'S A GOOD THING CEREBUS DOESN'T BELIEVE IN OMENS

HE'S USUALLY NOT THIS BAD -- IT MUST BE THE CLEAN AIR HERE!

AH, YESSS... IT'S ALL COMING BACK TO ME NOW... I REMEMBER THIS WELL... ITS BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE OPENED THIS TEXT! OF COURSE, UNTIL NOW I'VE HAD NO NEED TO REVIEW "101 USES FOR THE SACRED SANDS OF TIME SCEPTRE"! HEH, HEH, HEH...!

26

BUT NOW I POSSESS THE SCEPTRE. WITH ALL ITS POWERS... NOW... I AM READY!!!

KILL'IM!

GUT THE TYRANT PIG DOG, SAVANTI ROMERO

YEAH!

GET HIS GOLD!

SHHH!

GOLD?

NO ONE TOLD ME ABOUT THE GOLD!

A THOUSAND PARDONS LORD ROMERO-- BUT WE HAVE ANOTHER UP RISING OF VILLAGERS AND ASSORTED MERCENARY SLIM-- THEY'RE ATTACKING THE FRONT GATE!

NO, KIDDING?

HOW DELIGHTFUL! THEIR TIMING COULDN'T HAVE BEEN ANY BETTER! MY FIRST CHANCE TO SHOW THIS WRETCHED WORLD MY NEW POWER!

27

SIRE, I'VE POSTED MORE ARCHERS ON THE WALLS -- SHALL I ORGANIZE A MOUNTED TROOP TO COUNTER ATTACK?

NO! DEFINTELY NOT! PUT EVERY AVAILABLE MAN ON THE WALLS, AND FOR NO REASON WHAT SO EVER, GO INTO THE FIELDS

SIRE?

HEH, HEH... YOU ARE ABOUT TO DISCOVER, GUARD CAPTAIN THE "WHY" BEHIND MY MAD HOBBY OF COLLECTING THE BODIES OF DEAD WARRIORS AND BURYING THEM IN THE FIELDS THAT SURROUND THIS CASTLE!

KILL! KILL!

KICK THE BUM OUT!

THROW HIM AROUND A LITTLE!

BITE 'IM!

POKE HIM IN THE EYE!

ERR... AH... YES, MY LORD - YOUR... UH HOBBY DID SEEM A BIT... ODD...

ODD? ODD?!! YES, IT WAS RATHER ODD WASN'T IT?!! HA, HA, HA, HA! WELL, NOW YOU'LL FINDOUT WHY--

-- AS ALL THOSE DEAD WARRIORS SHALL RISE TO FIGHT AGAIN!

EEEK!

28

HURRY, GUYS, PLEASE?! I HATE HEIGHTS! OOH, I'M GONNA DIE, I JUST KNOW IT!

CEREBUS AND LEO KOD THE GUARDS-- HURRY, BEFORE WERE SPOTTED!

UNF--! SHE'S UP! LET'S MOVE!

LET'S SEE-- SORCERERS ARE PARTIAL TO ODD-SHAPED QUARTERS...

LIKE THAT *TOWER* OVER THERE...

CEREBUS CAN TAKE OUT MOST OF THE GUARDS HIMSELF

TRY AND KEEP THE "*KILLER OF MESSENGERS*" ON A SHORT LEASH

29

NOW, GO KEEP THOSE RIDICULOUS REBEL SCUM OFF THE WALLS FOR ANOTHER FEW MINUTES--THEN I WILL HANDLE THE REST!

HOLD 'EM, HOLD 'EM! DON'T LET THEM ON TOP, TROOPS!

GROUND LEVEL GUNS-- AND THE PALACE GATE IS DIRECTLY ACROSS FROM THIS DOOR...ABOUT 100 YARDS!

30

RISE, MY DEAD ONES--! LET THE SLAIN BECOME SLAYERS!!

TARTER SAUCE, SALSA, AND MUSTARD, PHEW! BAGBALM, GARLIC AND MIXED SALTS TOO!

SPUCK

POP

PUCK

HEE HEE HEE HEE!

SNICKER SNICK

GIGGLE

PICKLES, ONIONS, AND SOME SPECIAL KINDA GOO! TUTTI-FRUTTI SKIP-A-DEE DOO! UP MY DEAD, GET A CLUE, IT'S TIME TO LIVE, THERES LOTS TO DO!

HAH! IT'S DONE--THE WORDS ARE SPOKEN! BY THE POWER OF THE SANDS OF TIME, MY ARMY LIVES! LAUGH--LAUGH, YOU UNDEAD FOOLS--YOUR MASTER, SAVANTI ROMERO, COMMANDS IT!

HEE HEE HAHA HAH HEE HEE HAH HEE HEE HEE

HAHAHAH

WAIT!

TWO GUARDS--ONE ON EITHER SIDE OF THE DOORS!

GOT'EM!

HA!!--

UNN!

WOMP

BAM

WACK

OOF!

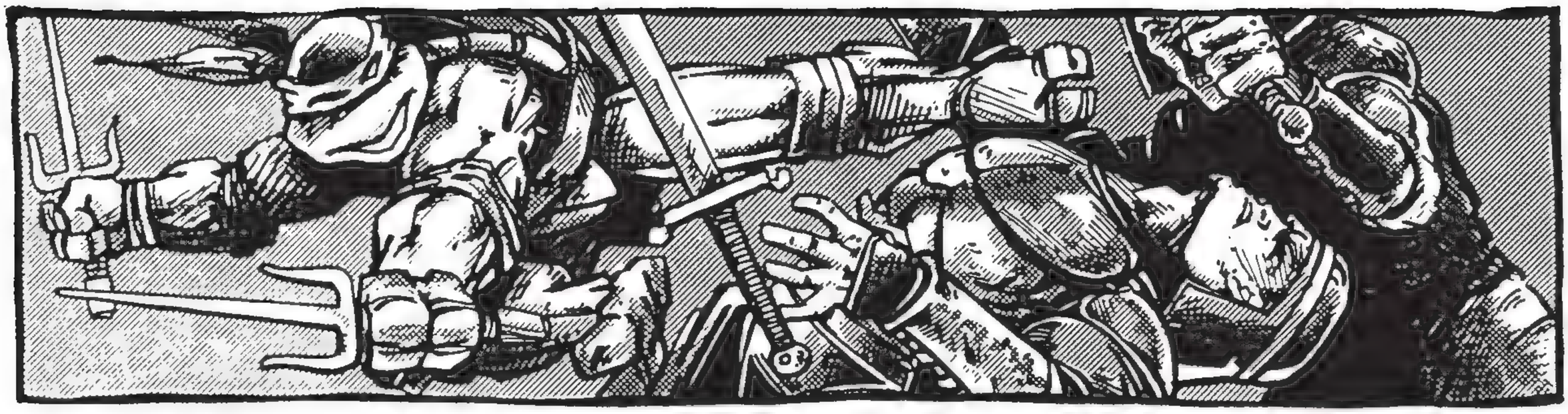
LET'S GO!

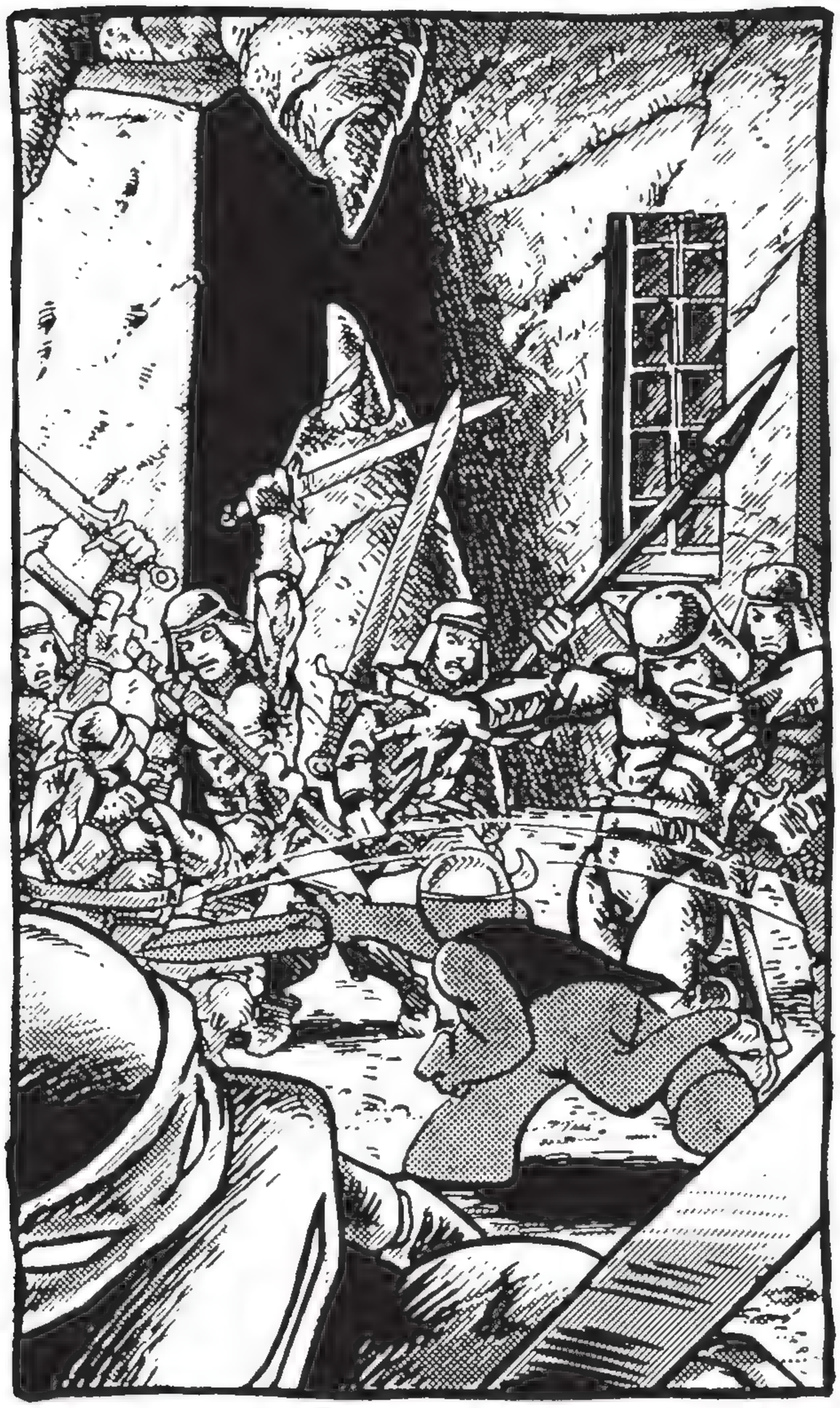
LOOK-- REBELS! INSIDE THE WALLS! GET THEM!

AH-- I BELIEVE THEY PLAN ON GETTING US-- HERE THEY COME!

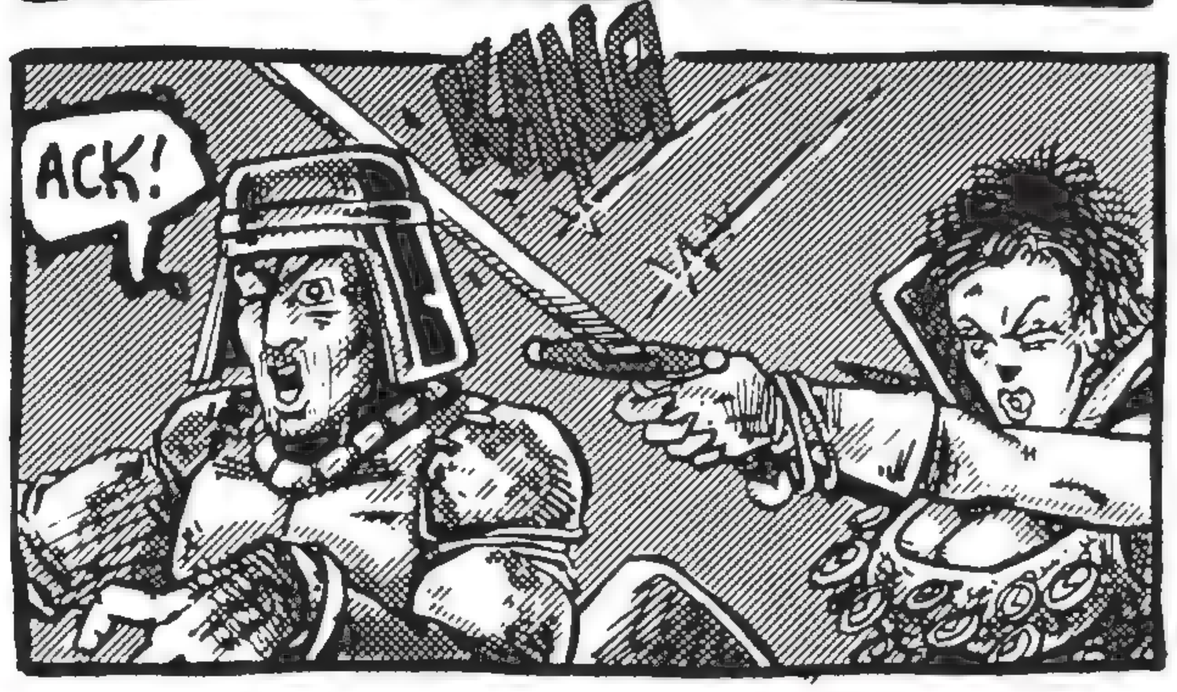
NEXT TIME YELL "LET'S GO" A LITTLE LOUDER

SOME OF THEM DIDN'T HEAR YOU ...





TRUCK


ACK!

I'VE GOT THE DOORS--
EVERYONE INSIDE,
QUICKLY!
33

OUTSIDE...

HUHAH

HA HA HA

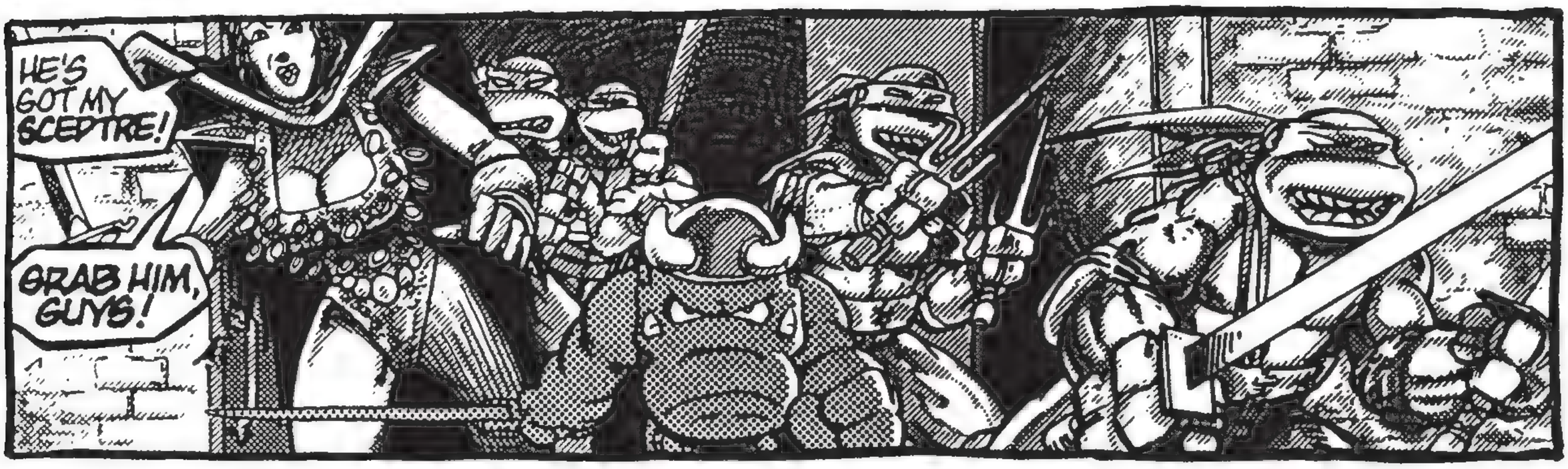
WE'VE BEEN TRICKED--THE WITCH'S SPELLS ARE USELESS! WE'RE GETTING SLAUGHTERED!

RUN AWAY!

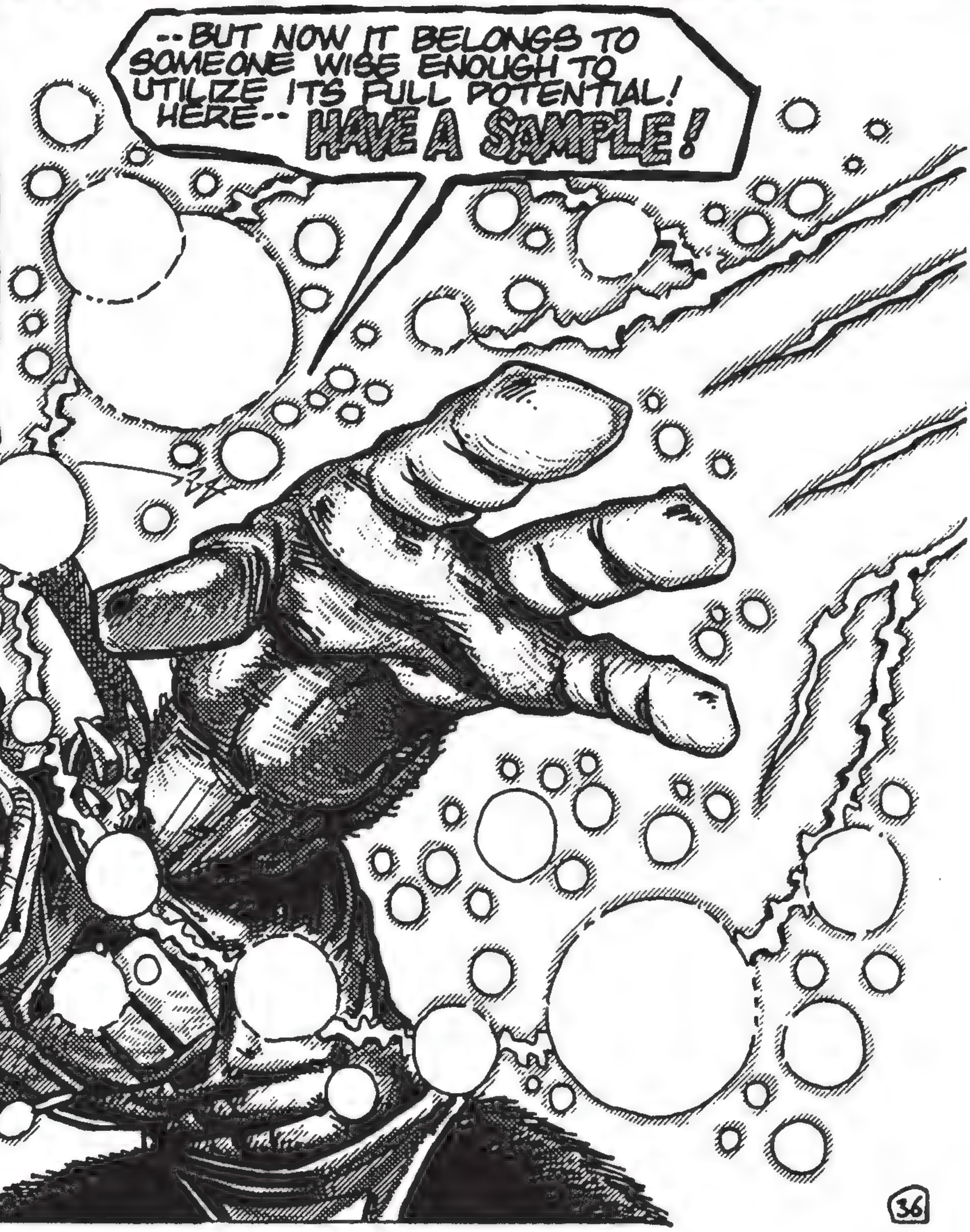
RUN AWAY!

HA HA HA HA HEE HEE HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HO HO HO HO HO HO HA HA HA HA HO HO HA HA HO HO HA HA HO HO

HUH?
WELL-- WHAT HAVE WE GOT HERE?!
OOOH-- IT'S YOU FOOLS!


HE'S GOT MY SCEPTRE!
GRAB HIM, GUYS!

YOUR SCEPTRE--? YOUR SCEPTRE!!?! AHAHAHAHA! YOU PATHETIC STUPID TWIT! YOU MAY HAVE BROUGHT THE SCEPTRE HERE--


--BUT NOW IT BELONGS TO SOMEONE WISE ENOUGH TO UTILIZE ITS FULL POTENTIAL! HERE-- HAVE A SAMPLE!

36

NOT BAD, HUH?! HEE, HEE, HEE, HEE!-- AND THIS IS JUST THE TIP OF THE ICE BERG!

ANYTHING I WISH FOR IS MINE-- NEW LOOKS, UNTOLD RICHES, SUPER POWERS--

--ALL THE LADIES I WANT!

AND WORLD DOMINATION, OF COURSE!

BUT NOW, TO THE SITUATION AT HAND--

--YOU SIX IDIOTS ... AND THE MANNER OF YOUR PASSING! HMM... HOW SHALL I DO IT...?

COSMIC FLAME? MYSTIC DRY-ROT? TRANSMUTATION INTO STONE?

STOP!

GACK!

YOU!

YOU?!

WELL, DON'T THIS BEAT ALL! OL' SAVANT! ROMERO-- I'D FORGOTTEN THAT I'D SENT YOU HERE! STILL UP TO NO GOOD, I SEE!

YOU FORGOT... YOU FORGOT!!? YOU BASTARD! YOU RUINED MY CAREER AS AN ASSISTANT GOD, MUTATED ME INTO THIS OBSCENE FORM, CAST ME INTO THIS GOD FOR SAKEN LAND FOR ALL ETERNITY... AND YOU FORGOT!?!

ROMERO, YOU PLAY THE INNOCENT AS BADLY NOW AS YOU DID WHEN I CAUGHT YOU PLOTTING TO OVER-THROW ME, EONS AGO--

-- SEEK NOT TO BLAME ME FOR YOUR WRETCHED STATE!

HUMPF!

I WAS WEAK, THEN-- BUT THAT'S ALL CHANGED NOW--!

HOW ABOUT THAT! ONE OF THE GREATEST POWER OBJECTS IN EXISTENCE-- AND I CONTROL IT!

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO SAY TO THAT, YOU OLD FOOL?!

--YOUR SCEPTRE WITH THE SACRED SANDS OF TIME--

IT'S MINE NOW!

HA HA HEE HEE HO HA HA

HO, HO--OH BOY, THAT'S A GOOD ONE!

DUM-DEE DUM-DEE DUM-DEE DUM--

HERE WE GO!!

I'D FORGOTTEN WHAT A COMEDIAN YOU WERE, ROMERO! HEE, HEE, HEE! WHAT A CARD, WHAT A CUT UP--!

GAARRR!!

DON'T LAUGH AT ME--I HATE THAT! YOU ALWAYS LAUGHED AT ME! WELL, AFTER TODAY, NO MORE!

TODAY, I GET EVEN!!

FRY! FRY!

OXIDIZE AND DIE! HA, HA, HA!

BURN, SCORCH, SEAR, AND CHAR!

COOK, SIZZLE -- DO SOMETHING HOT!

PLEASE...?

COME ON...! A SPARK?! ANYTHING?

DONE YET?

PUFF! WHEEZE! GASP!

UH-OH... I THINK I BE IN TROUBLE...

WHA--WHAT PUFF HAPPENED? YOU DIDN'T EVEN TWITCH?

ALL THE SCEPTRE'S WHEEZE POWER... DIDN'T TOUCH YOU... WHY--?

FIZZLE

SPARK

SPARK

SPUTTER

ZZZZ

OH, SAVANTI-- YOU REALLY ARE AN AMUSING FELLOW!

I DIDN'T REALIZE WHEN I IMPROVED YOUR LOOKS AND SENT YOU TO THIS ERA, IT WOULD AFFECT YOUR MIND SO MUCH!

YOU SEE, WHAT IT BASICALLY COMES DOWN TO IS THIS: YOU'RE WAY BEHIND THE TIMES...

THIS IS THE NEW GENERATION OF POWER OBJECTS--

...THE TECHNOLOGY WE HAVE TODAY PUTS THOSE CRUMMY OLD MYSTIC TALISMANS TO SHAME! THIS, MY FRIEND, IS THE MOST POWERFUL OBJECT IN THE TRANS-TEMPORAL UNIVERSE--

THE DIGITAL COSMIC QUARTZ!!

AND NOW SAVANTI...!

...NOW YOU SHALL FEEL ITS MIGHT!!!

41

NO PLEASE--! I'LL BE GOOD THIS TIME, REALLY! I WILL! PLEASE, PLEASE!

GOOD BYE, SAVANTI!

SNAP!

BLIP

SO MUCH FOR THAT PEST! NOW...

HI GUYS!

RENET!

HOW'S IT GOING?

NOT SO GREAT, I SEE...!

I MUST ADMIT YOU MADE A VALIANT ATTEMPT TO RE-TRIEVE MY TWICE-STOLEN SCEPTRE, RENET..

G-GEEZ, LORD SIMULTANEOUS, I DIDN'T REALLY, LIKE, STEAL IT! Y'SEE, THIS BIG, UGLY DEMON TOLD ME TO--

STOP RIGHT THERE!

SAY NOT ANOTHER WORD, YOUNG LADY!

GULP!

YOU ARE IN AN INCREDIBLE AMOUNT OF TROUBLE AS IT IS--

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO ADD A FEW MORE LIES TO YOUR STACK OF OFFENSES?!

LEAVE HER ALONE, BUTTHEAD! CAN'T YOU SEE SHE'S SCARED TO DEATH OF YOU?! NO WONDER SHE LEFT YOUR SERVICE! AND IF YOU LAY ONE FINGER ON HER, I'LL--

WELL, LA DEE DAH! DON'T WORRY, CHUM-- THIS "BUTTHEAD" WON'T HARM RENET IN THE WAY YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT-- BUT SHE WILL BE PUNISHED!

ANYWAY, YOU LOT ARE THE LAST BUNCH OF LOONIES I NEED TO EXPLAIN MYSELF TO--! I THINK IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO LEAVE--

--ADIOS AMIGOS!

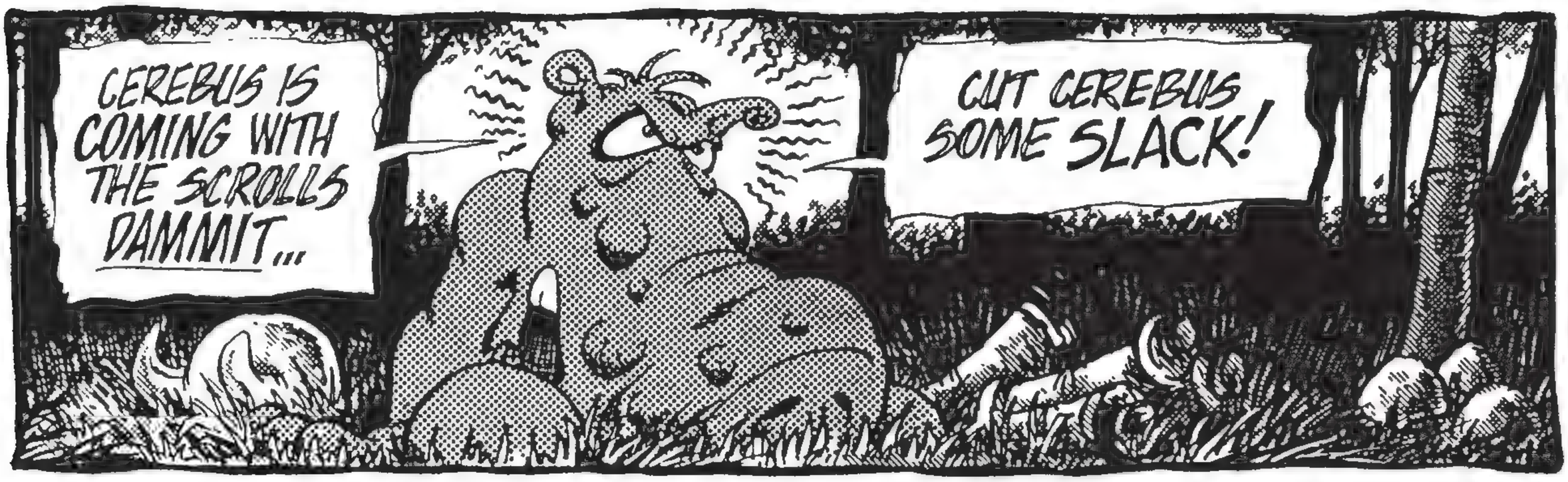
BLIP BLIP BLIP

--AND THAT LEAVES YOU! STILL WANT THOSE SILLY SCROLLS, EH? WELL...

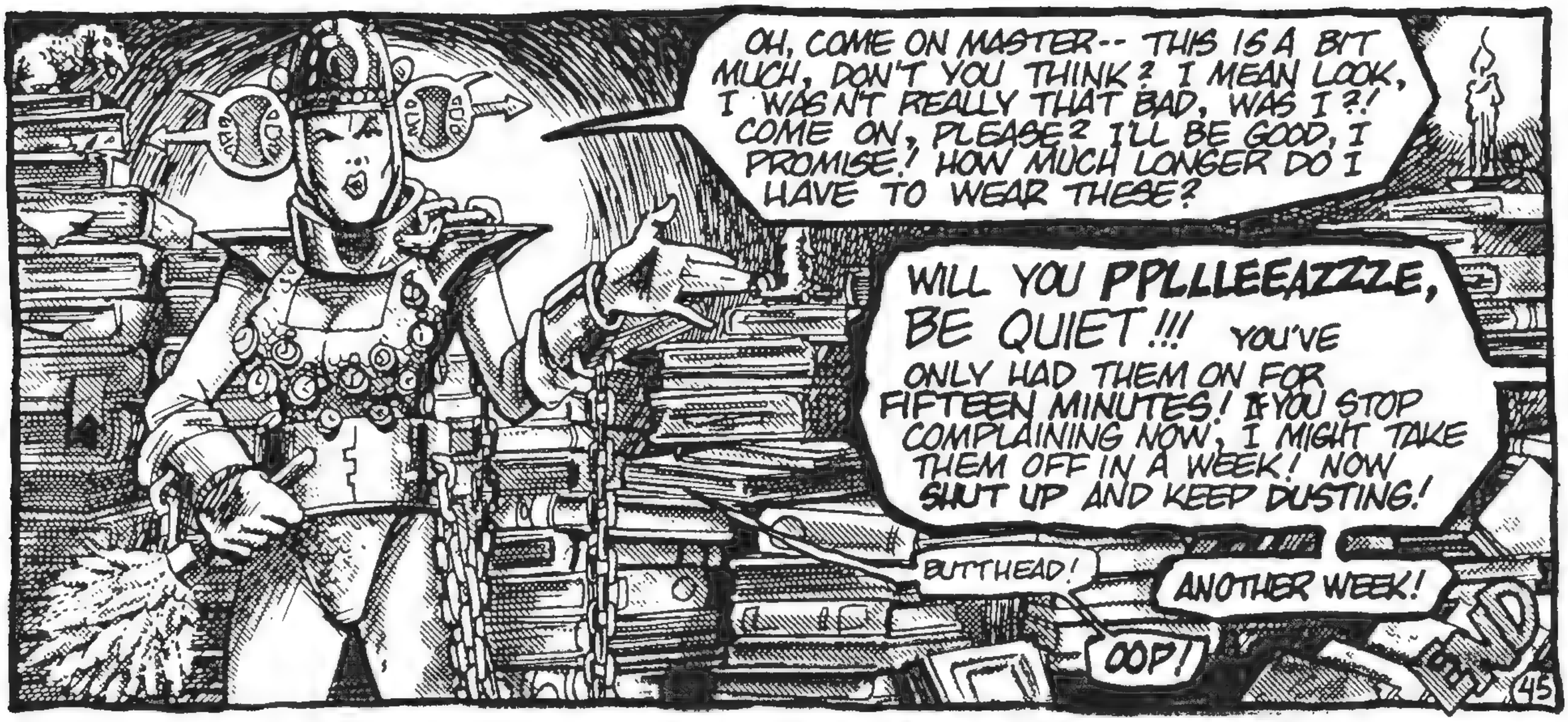
POOF!
HERE YOU GO!
BYE NOW!
BBD
WELL, IT'S DOWN TO JUST YOU AND I, MY ADVENTUROUS ONE--
TIME TO GO HOME AND FACE THE MUSIC, RENET!
OOH, HE'S GONNA KILL ME, I JUST KNOW IT!!!
NO, I'M NOT GOING TO KILL YOU!
CALM DOWN!
GEEZ! WHAT A WORRY WART!
44

EPILOGUE

OH, THIS REALLY BITES THE BIG ONE! I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TIME ZONE I'M IN!
WHAT COULD BE WORSE THAN THIS?!


CEREBUS IS COMING WITH THE SCROLLS DAMMIT...
CUT CEREBUS SOME SLACK!

YAAH! IT'S ALL DARK! WHERE ARE WE?!
HOME, RAPH-- NEW YORK.
WE'RE IN A DUMPSTER.
MUMPFH-- THESE TRIPS HAVE GOT TO STOP! THE LANDINGS ARE KILLERS!
GAFF! MIKE- GET OFF MY HEAD!


OH, COME ON MASTER-- THIS IS A BIT MUCH, DON'T YOU THINK? I MEAN LOOK, I WASN'T REALLY THAT BAD, WAS I?! COME ON, PLEASE? I'LL BE GOOD, I PROMISE! HOW MUCH LONGER DO I HAVE TO WEAR THESE?
WILL YOU PPLLLEEAZZZE, BE QUIET!!! YOU'VE ONLY HAD THEM ON FOR FIFTEEN MINUTES! IF YOU STOP COMPLAINING NOW, I MIGHT TAKE THEM OFF IN A WEEK! NOW SHUT UP AND KEEP DUSTING!
BUTTHEAD!
ANOTHER WEEK!
OOP!
END
45

ANNOTATIONS

KEVIN EASTMAN

I went completely nuts on this issue. I think I was more selfish and guarded with the writing and layouts with Pete than I had ever been on any of the other Turtles books, and looking back I'm not exactly sure why. We talked out the story and the beats like always, but when I dug into it, I became obsessed and consumed with it—even expanding the story to 45 pages in length.

I know we were both huge fans of Dave Sim and his self-published creation, *Cerebus* (as well as a few others making their mark in the mid-'70s, like Wendy and Richard Pini's *Elfquest* series), and I know we were all collectively huge fans of the self-publishing cartoonists from the late '60s that led the way—Corben, Bode, Crumb, and the like—but this was different…

I think I REALLY latched onto the idea that if this Canadian guy could get all this attention with a book about this little Aardvark running around like Conan the Barbarian hacking people up, because he was drawing it like Barry Windsor-Smith's art for Marvel's *Conan* earlier in that decade, why couldn't we do something like that?

Something to get it started… to get us noticed… we could make it a parody of all our favorite comics, but drawn in the style of another personal hero of mine, Frank Miller, and his groundbreaking *Ronin* project. Yeah, that's the ticket!

Regardless of how the issue's tone and mood specifically evolved, Pete was always great—in for a penny, in for a pound—and we always kept the playing field as equal as possible. This was an AWESOME issue, and we all did it together—Me, Pete, Dave, and Gerhard—and although I have a zillion wonderful memories from this time period, this is one of my favorites. We threw everything including the kitchen sink in there, and in some places it showed. But man, what a ride!

I would LOVE to do another crossover like this one day… it REALLY was one of the best rides ever.

PETER LAIRD

This was the issue which featured a crossover adventure with Dave Sim's great character Cerebus the Aardvark. Kevin was a huge fan of *Cerebus* and Sim, and really pushed hard to get this project together. Dave was amenable to it, and turned in some great stuff—he did all the drawing of Cerebus in that issue as well as Cerebus' very witty dialogue.

As I recall, for some reason Kevin only penciled this promotional poster image (below), and I got the job of not only inking it but coloring it as well. This was pretty unusual, as typically Kevin would handle color jobs of this nature. And given that this one involved Cerebus, it's especially surprising he didn't do this one. I don't remember all the details as to how I ended up doing this work, but it was fun, and I used a technique I was enjoying at the time of using acetate overlays to do wacky color backgrounds, mixing various color inks with salt to achieve some interesting effects.

ANNOTATIONS

Page 1: I always loved the klutzy *Sorceror's Apprentice* character, and we were long overdue for another female cast member in the TMNT main lineup—so, based on a number of Hollywood stereotypes and some personal inspirations, Renet was born!

Pages 2–3: Heavily inspired by *Time Bandits*, our adventure takes the bored modern girl wannabe, Renet, who is training with the tough taskmaster Lord Simultaneous. She steals his "Time Travel Scepter" and takes off through a portal that lands her square in the middle of four VERY surprised Turtles!

Pages 6–7: Actually, make that right on top of the VERY surprised Turtles. Man, she was fun to write, and I think it really adds so much freshness to the Turtles themselves. They act differently around a new person, so we get to write them differently, and find out new cool things about our own creations along the way.

Page 10: With apologies to Terry Gilliam, Lord Simultaneous arrives to reclaim the scepter, as Renet quickly beams them out of there, to a place on Earth before humans recorded time…

Page 11: For some reason I had it in my head, as big a *Cerebus* fan as I was, that it didn't take place in our timeline—like Dave had his own universe/alternative history going on—a point Dave corrected early on with a note from Tarim. Heh!

Now, penciling in Cerebus was scary as hell—it was the first time I ever really messed with someone else's character—who was not only going to see it, but fix it. But Dave was very kind about the whole thing. First, the Barbarian Cerebus had pretty much been retired at the point of the crossover, so it was cool he let us take him back to that space. We'd send him all the penciled pages, for him and Gerhard to ink and tone. They pretty much stayed with my layout, which I took as a huge compliment. You can see some of the comparisons of my pencils and his inks in my *Artobiography* book published by Heavy Metal.

Pages 13–15: I pretty much wanted to get right into the action as they landed in Cerebus' time and get the introductions right out of the way. Much like Renet's entrance into the TMNTs' world, the new gang landed smack dab on top of Cerebus. There was still a lot of story to tell and we were burning through pages just to get to the action.

It was also a great way to get the bad guy in play right away—by making him an old enemy of Lord Simultaneous who had been banished there. Having the scepter call out to him once it arrives meant he was in the game from panel one. I named this guy Savanti Romero, after zombie effects legend Tom Savini, and the guy he did some of his coolest effects for, George Romero! I had like thirty-five other cameos planned that never got in—everyone from Paul Schaffer and David Letterman, the McKenzie Brothers, a Stephen King/Bernie Wrightson two-headed hunchback… and more, but I would have needed 45 more pages!

Page 21: The action sequences getting up to this splash page are so much fun, but I still can't get over the fact that once we got to this establishing shot, we must have felt the need to draw EVERY single cobblestone in the street! Fantastic! And did you notice the name of the tavern they're in? Chet's, of course!

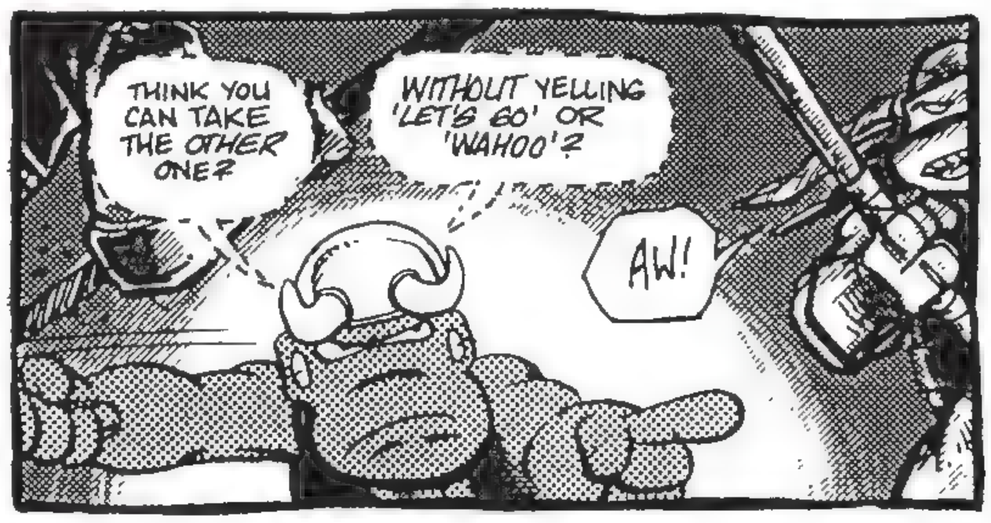
Pages 22–23: Kills me… I laugh every time I look at it. The whole bar setup worked out really well, and the rhythm of Renet's non-stop talking was coming together nicely. And the looks from the locals were priceless. That is the fun stuff.

Page 24: I know we had some of the studio guys pitch in on the toning and some of the backgrounds, but I can see clearly that those are Michael Dooney bushes and rocks in the large panel, so I think they all might have helped even more than I recall. There was some really fantastic drawing in this issue.

Page 27: I love to draw pages of attacking armies, and we did our little tribute to *Conan the Barbarian* in the second panel down on this page. When I was a kid I used to draw these endless battle scenes with hundreds of guys fighting in them, like the old movies, epic scenes—never got tired of it.

Although the thrust of the story was a dark comedy, it seems that more and more silly jokes started popping up the further we got along. The dialogue in this section of pages seems really silly.

Page 31: And here's the Savanti Romero payoff! I LOVE zombies, always have, and just HAD to have them in this story—my very own "laughing" army of the dead. Total *Army of Darkness* stuff six years before the film came out! Awesome movie by the way—Sam Raimi rocks!



Page 35: Really exciting fighting stuff here as they make their way through the castle, and I think Dave might have started to have a bit more fun with the dialogue as well. The Cerebus one liners about the TMNTs were coming hot and heavy and were VERY funny!

Pages 38–39: Lord Simultaneous is back in the house and looking a bit more like the Silver Surfer than the floating head from *Time Bandits*. And when he finally gets into human form, it's Elmer Fudd!

Page 41: The showdown between the two is really fun (I think)—and I am positive that the reveal of his true power—The Digital Cosmic Quartz—was a tip of the hat to Pete, who used to have a Casio calculator watch. He used it all the time.

Page 45: Couldn't have a proper ending without an epilogue, and this was a fun one!

#1 IN A ONE ISSUE MICRO SERIES

LEONARDO™

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE

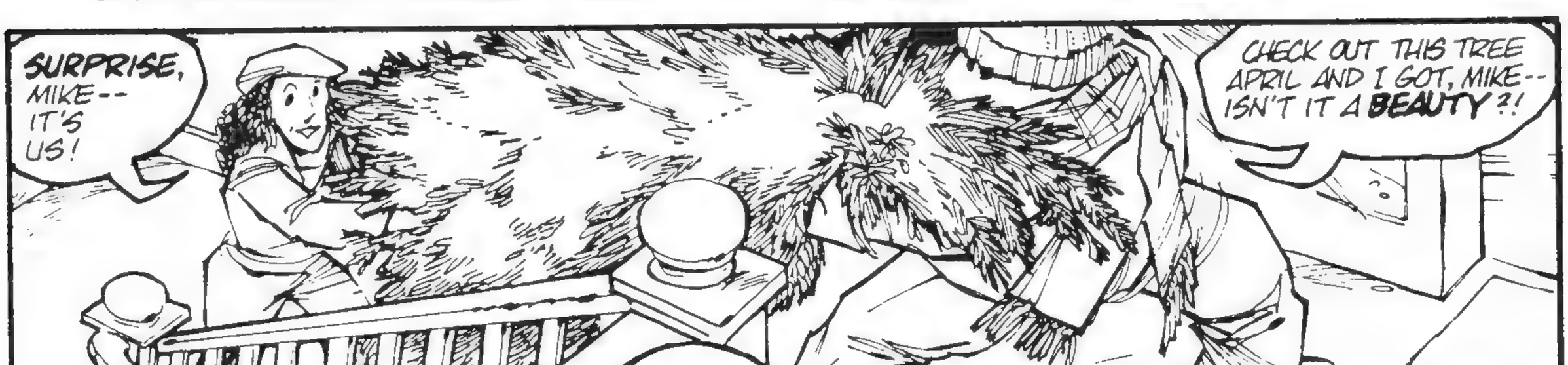
LEONARDO

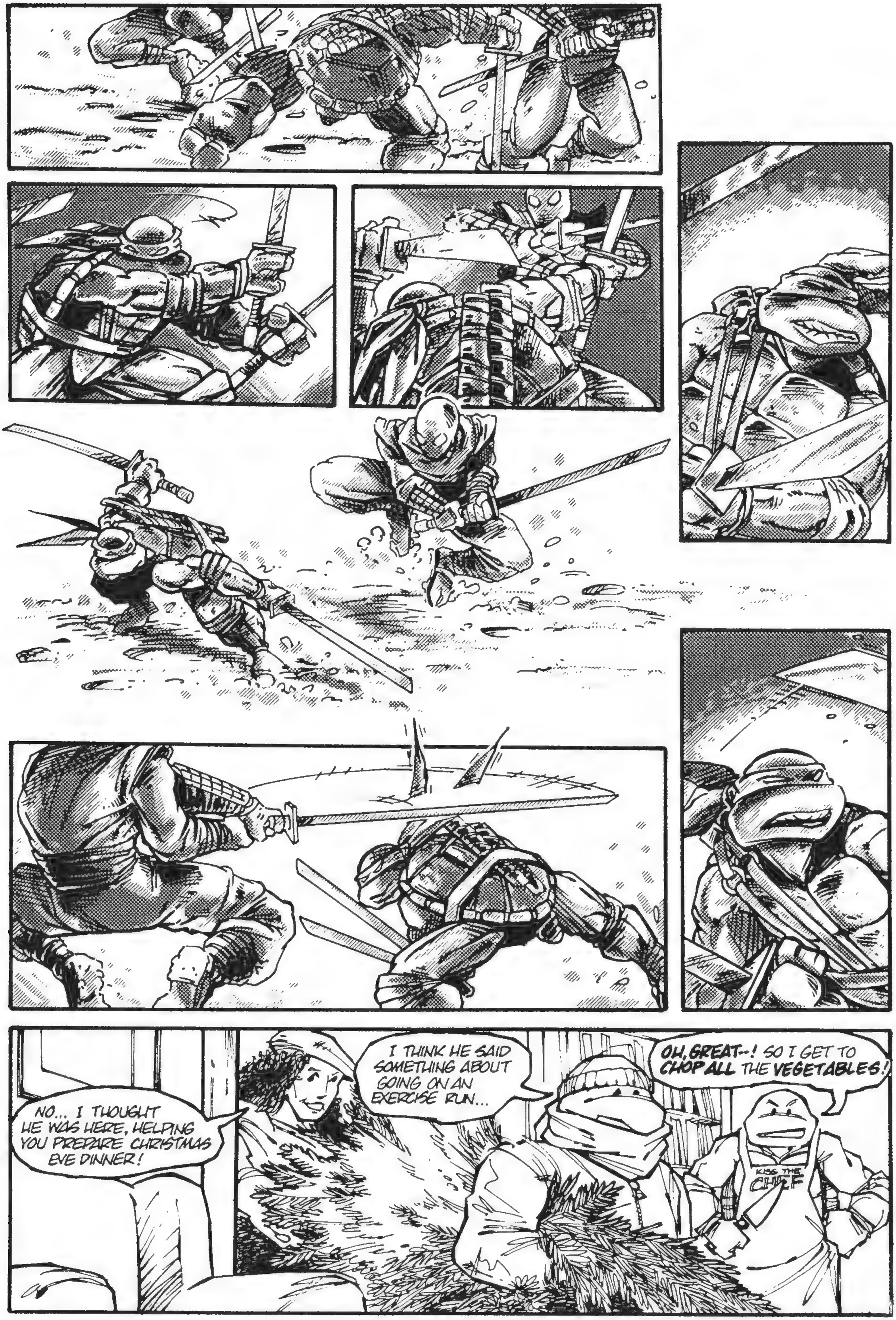
IBM
LEO--?
IS THAT
YOU?

...WHAT GOES AROUND...

...COMES AROUND!

AN EASTMAN, LAIRD, BISSETTE, DOONEY LAWSON, BROWN LAVIGNE PRODUCTION

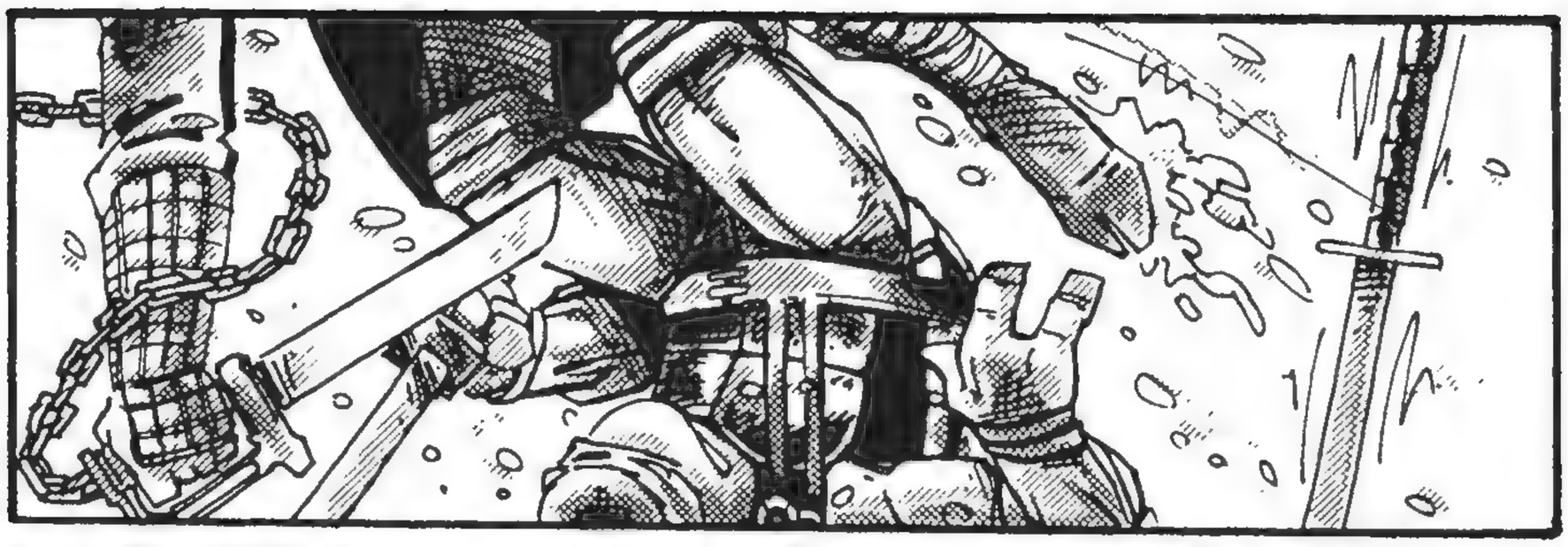


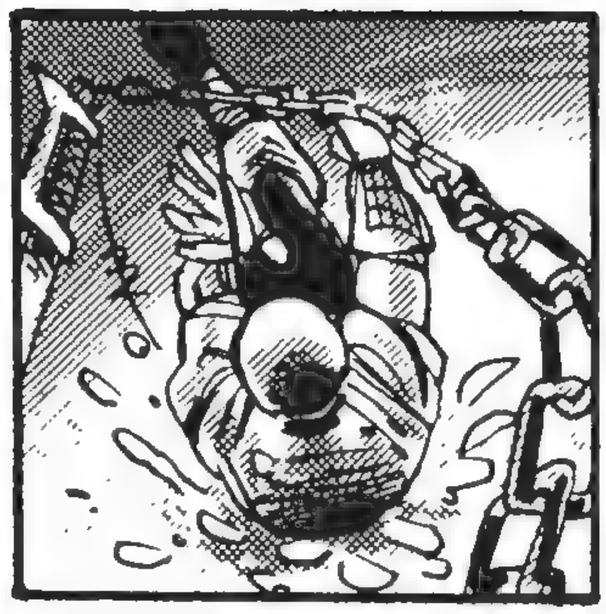

I THINK HE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT GOING ON AN EXERCISE RUN...
OH, GREAT--! SO I GET TO CHOP ALL THE VEGETABLES!
KISS THE CHEF
NO... I THOUGHT HE WAS HERE, HELPING YOU PREPARE CHRISTMAS EVE DINNER!

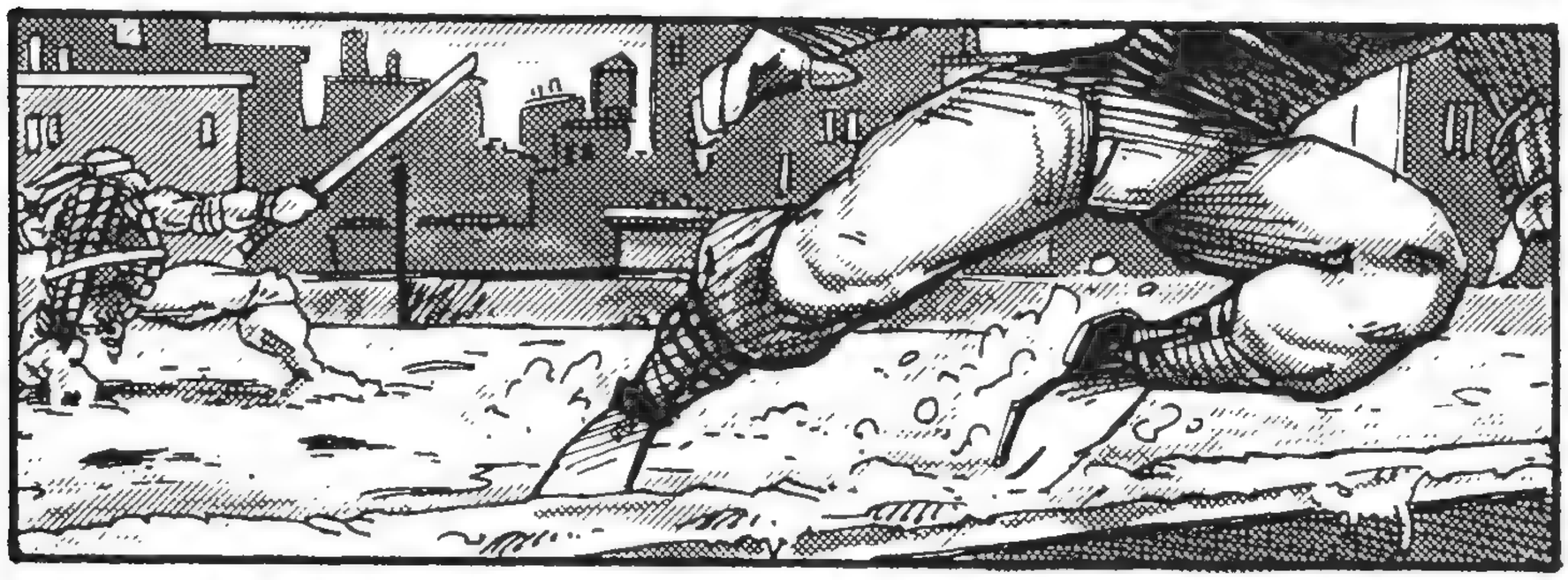
WWHH

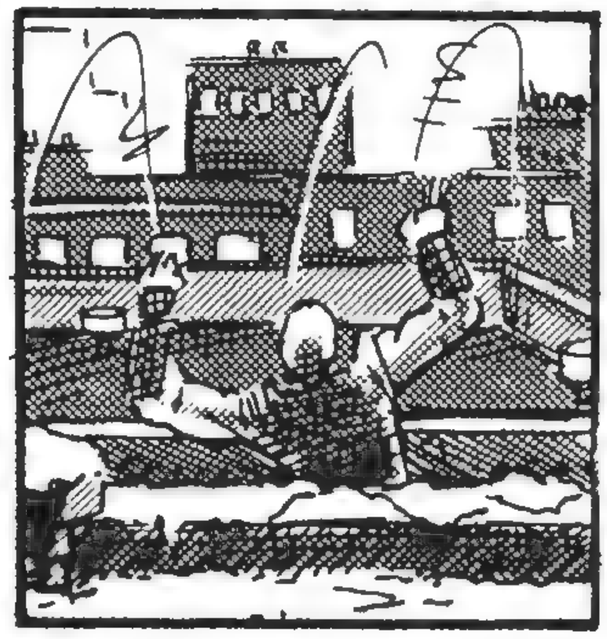
C'MON MIKE... MAYBE I CAN CHOP SOMETHING!

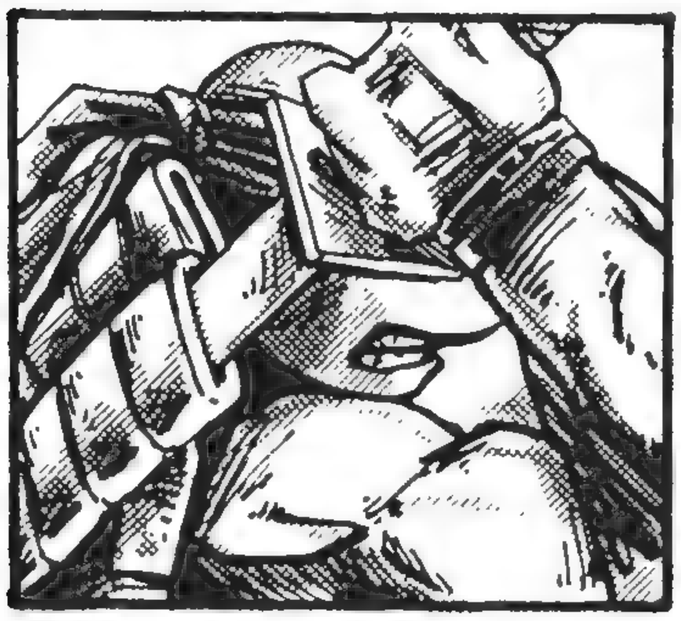
GEE, I'D LIKE TO HELP YOU, MIKE-- BUT I'VE GOT THIS TREE TO TRIM!

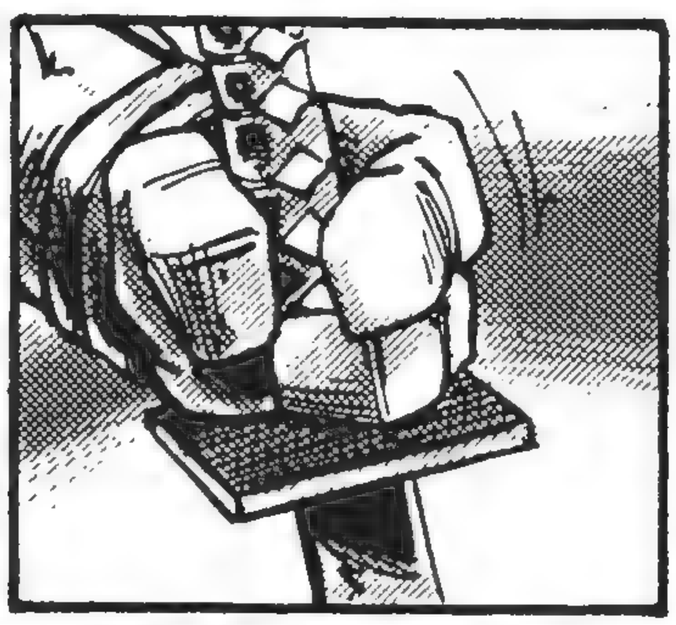


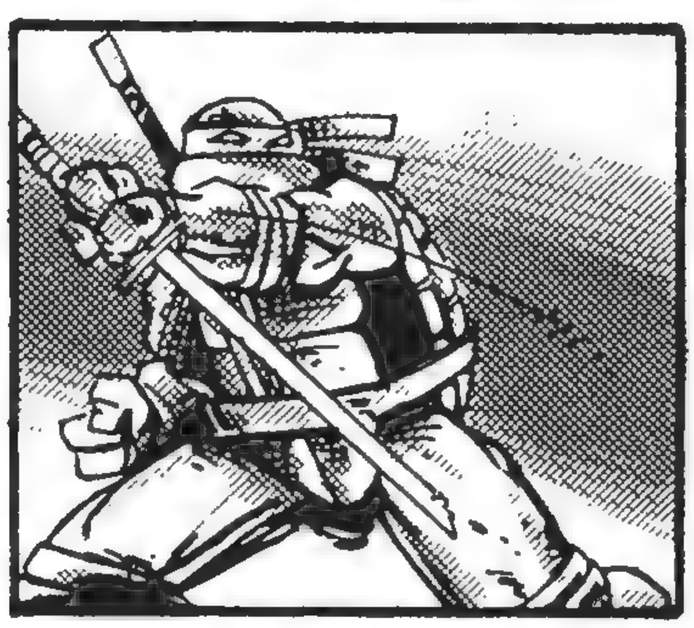




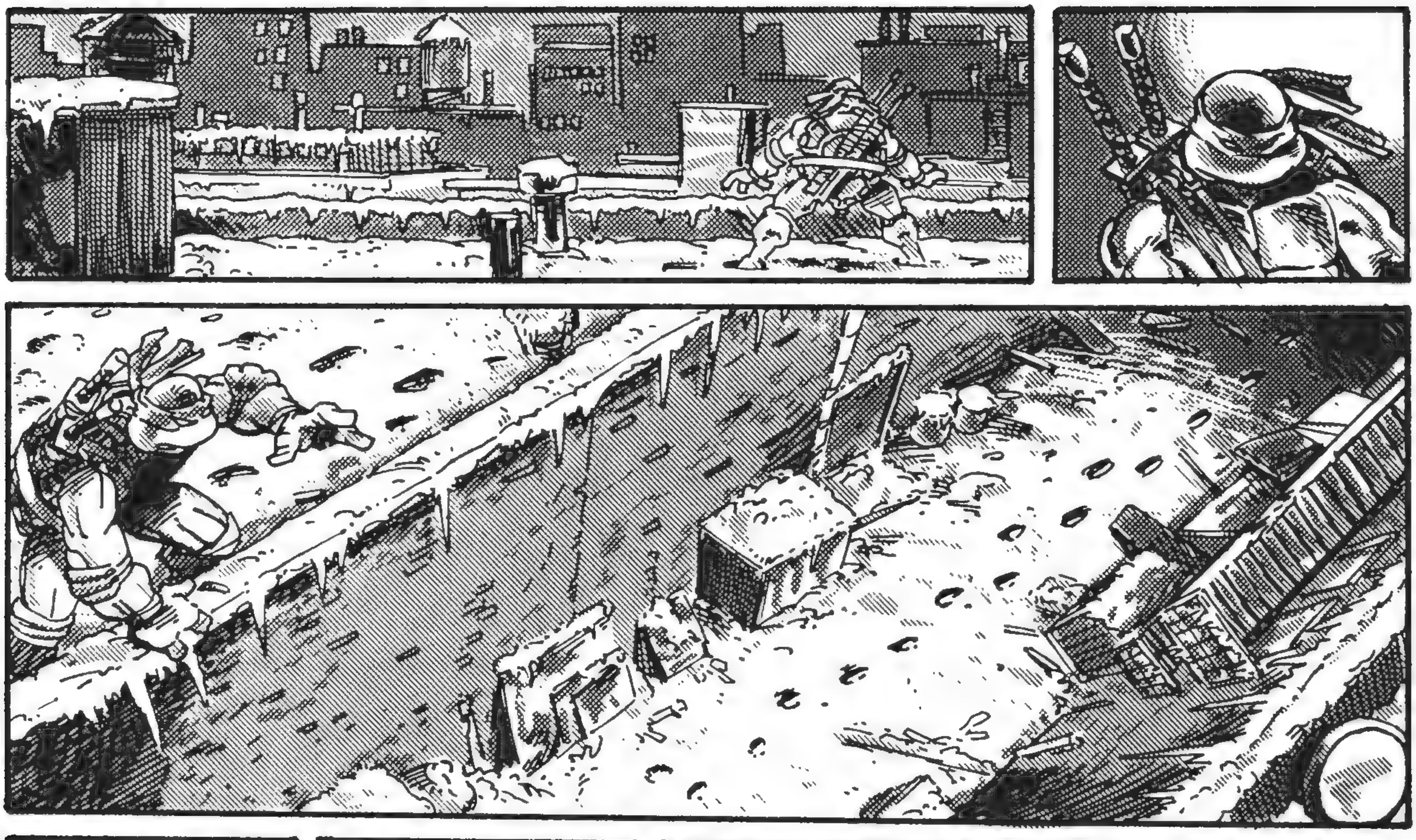


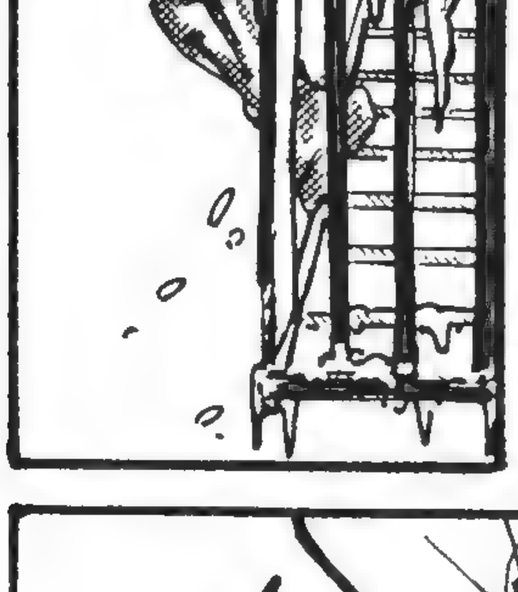


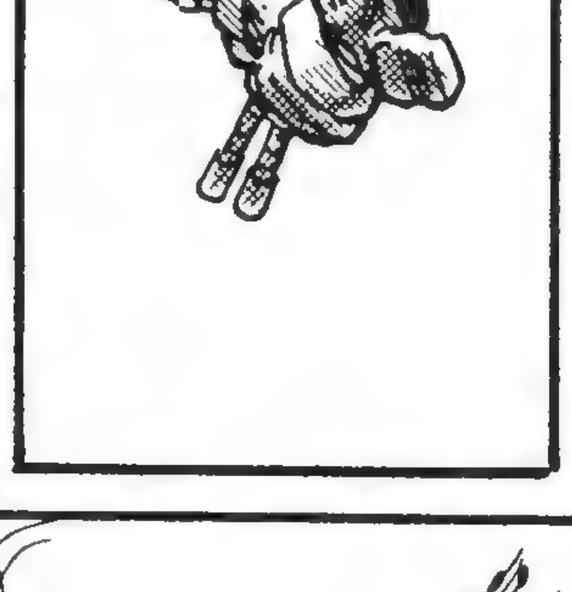




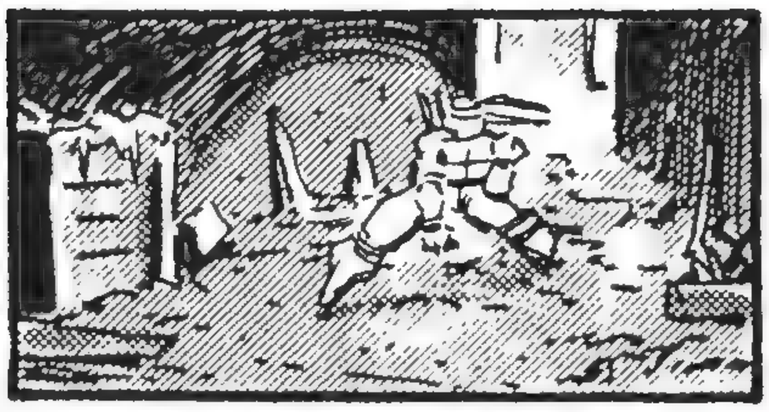
AH, YOU'RE BACK, APRIL...! DID YOU FIND A PROPER TREE?
HI, SPLINTER! YES, WE GOT A GREAT ONE--CHEAP, TOO!
Y'KNOW, WHATEVER LEO'S UP TO, YOU CAN BE SURE OF ONE, THING...
TEA
KISS THE CHEF

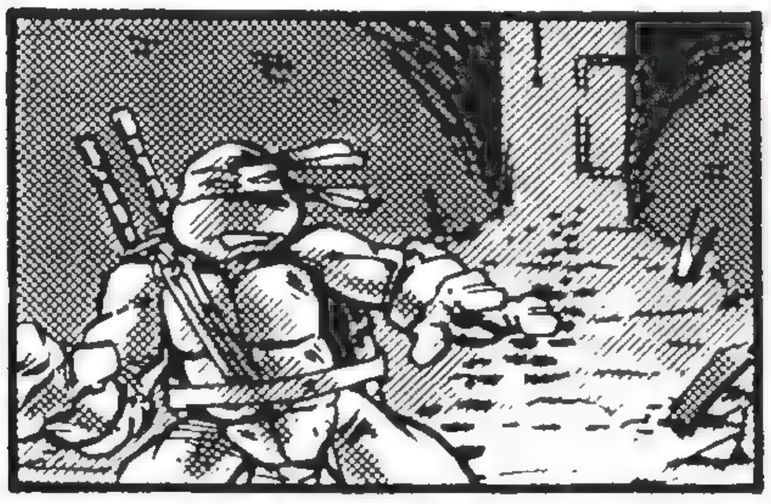


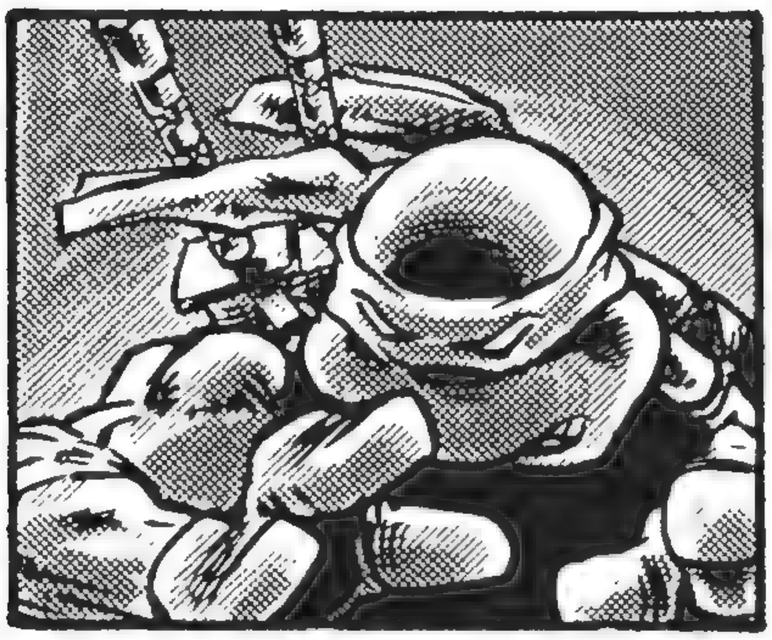




... ONCE HE GETS AN IDEA IN HIS HEAD--
--HE'S GONNA FOLLOW IT THROUGH TO THE BITTER END!







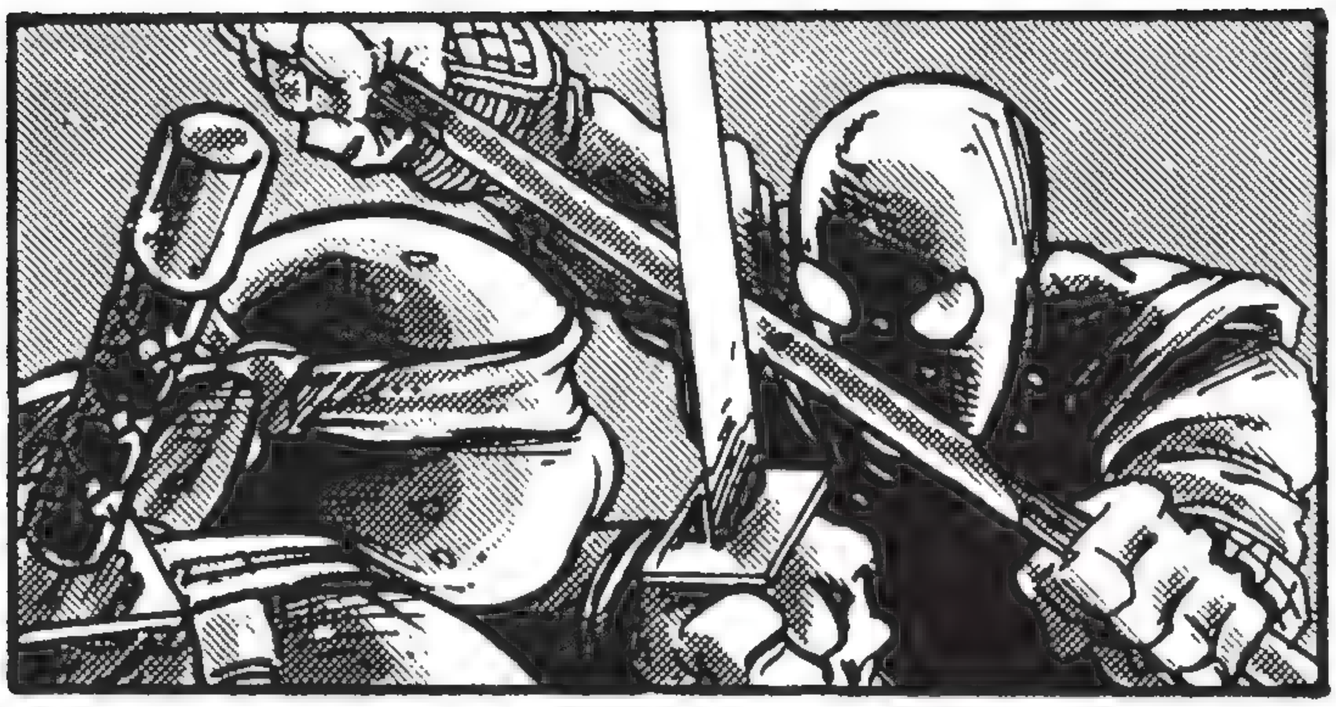
SHAK

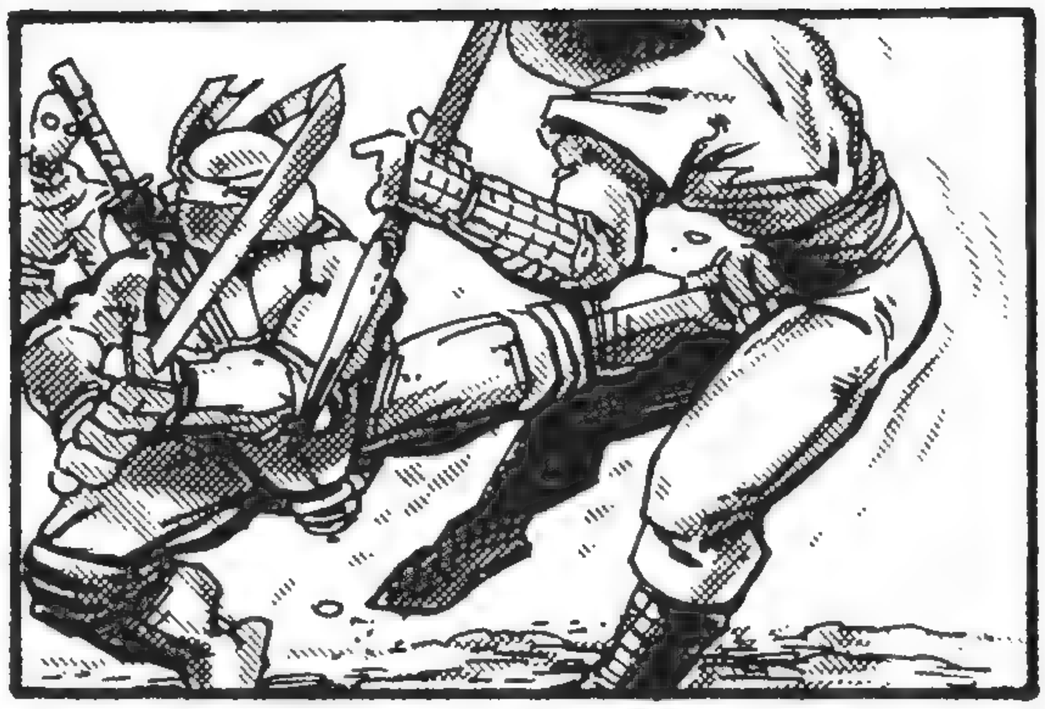
I HAVE FAITH THAT LEONARDO CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF...
YEAH... HE'S PROBABLY DOING SOME LAST-MINUTE CHRISTMAS SHOPPING...
... MAYBE HE'S BRINGING HOME A SURPRISE!

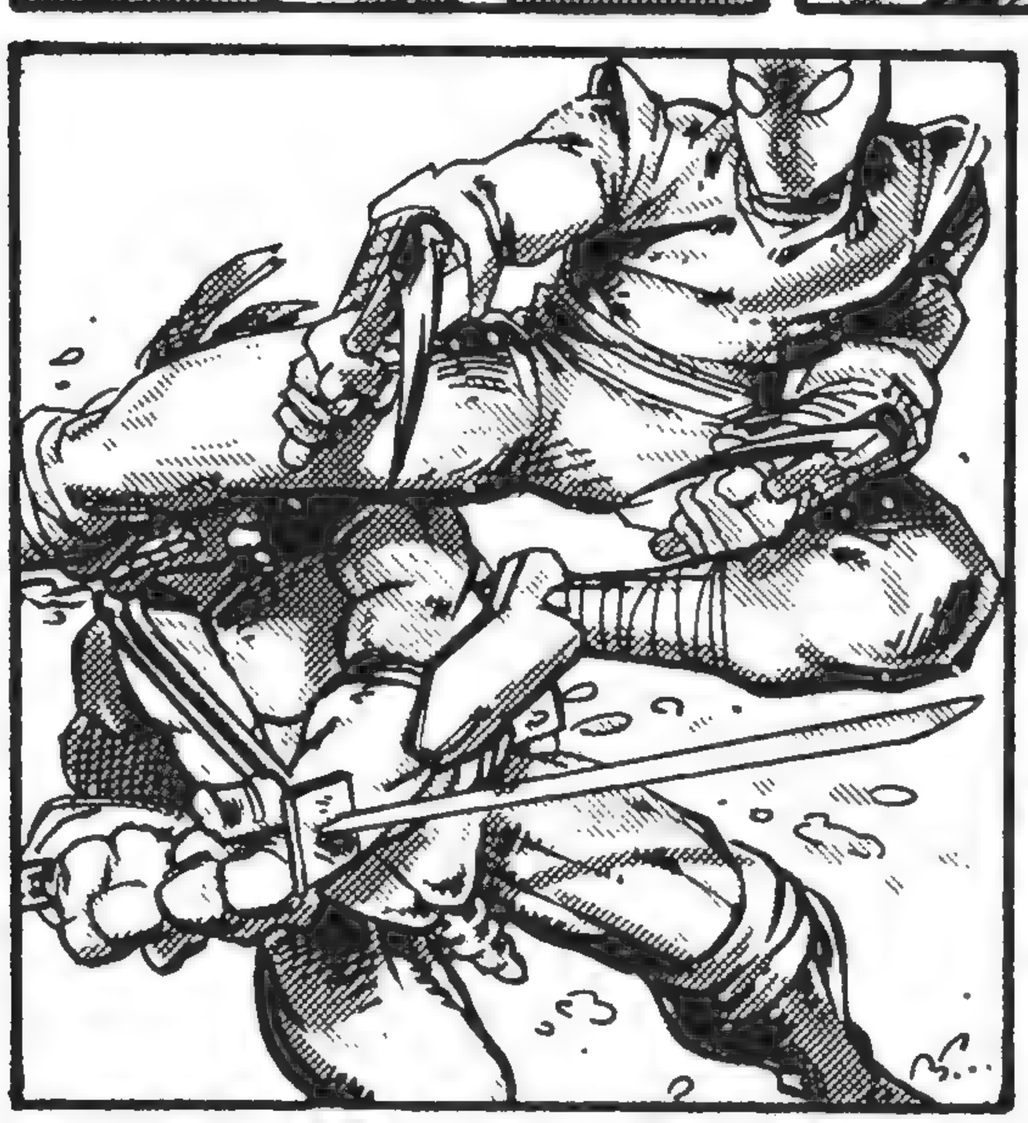
HEY RAPH-- WHAT'S WITH THE BUTTERFLY SWORDS?

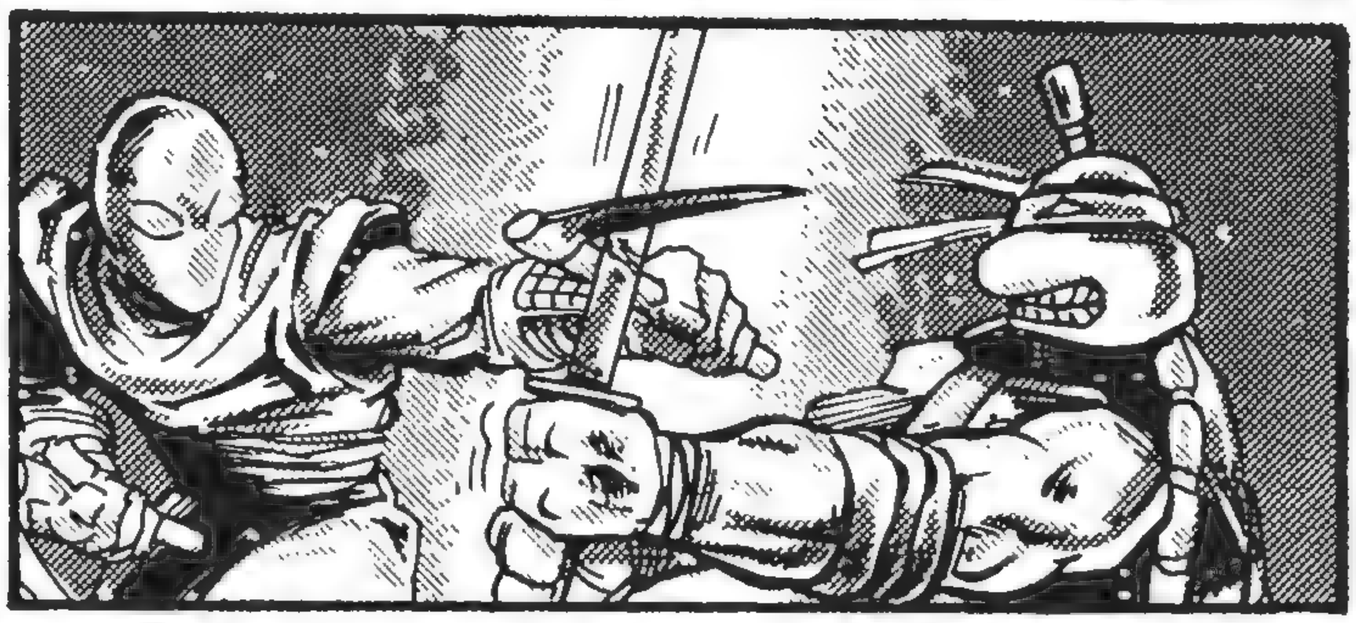
HEH, HEH...

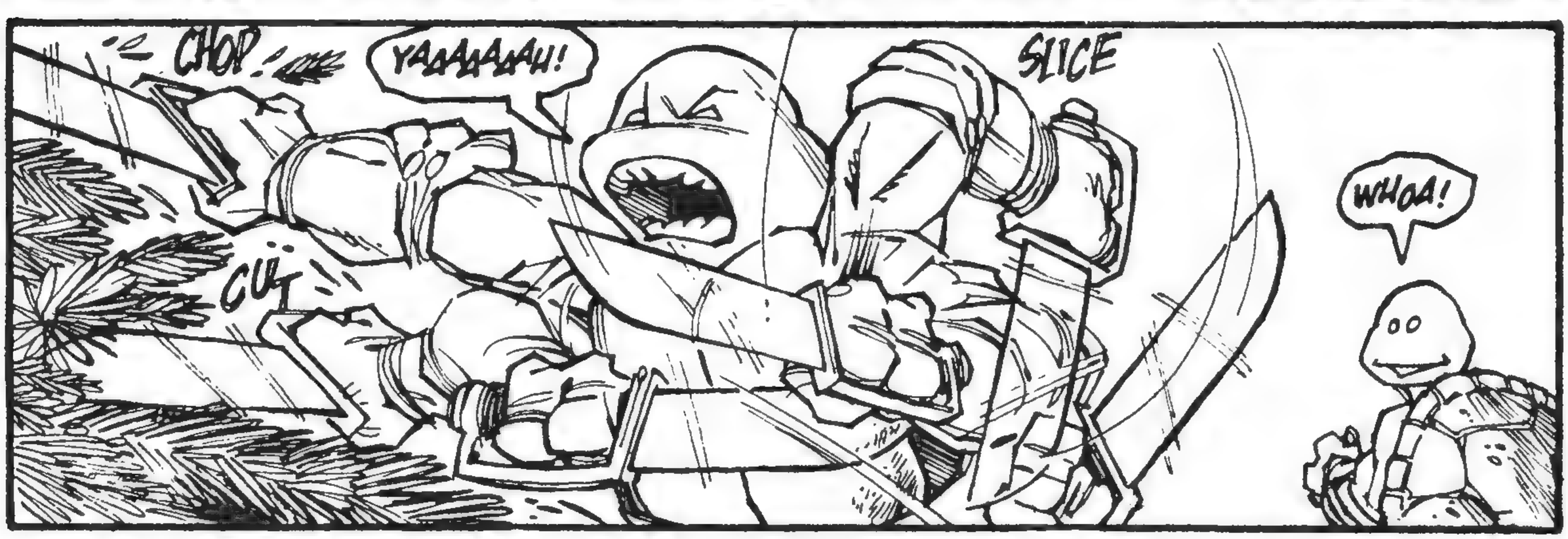
...NOW TO TRIM THIS TREE- MY WAY!

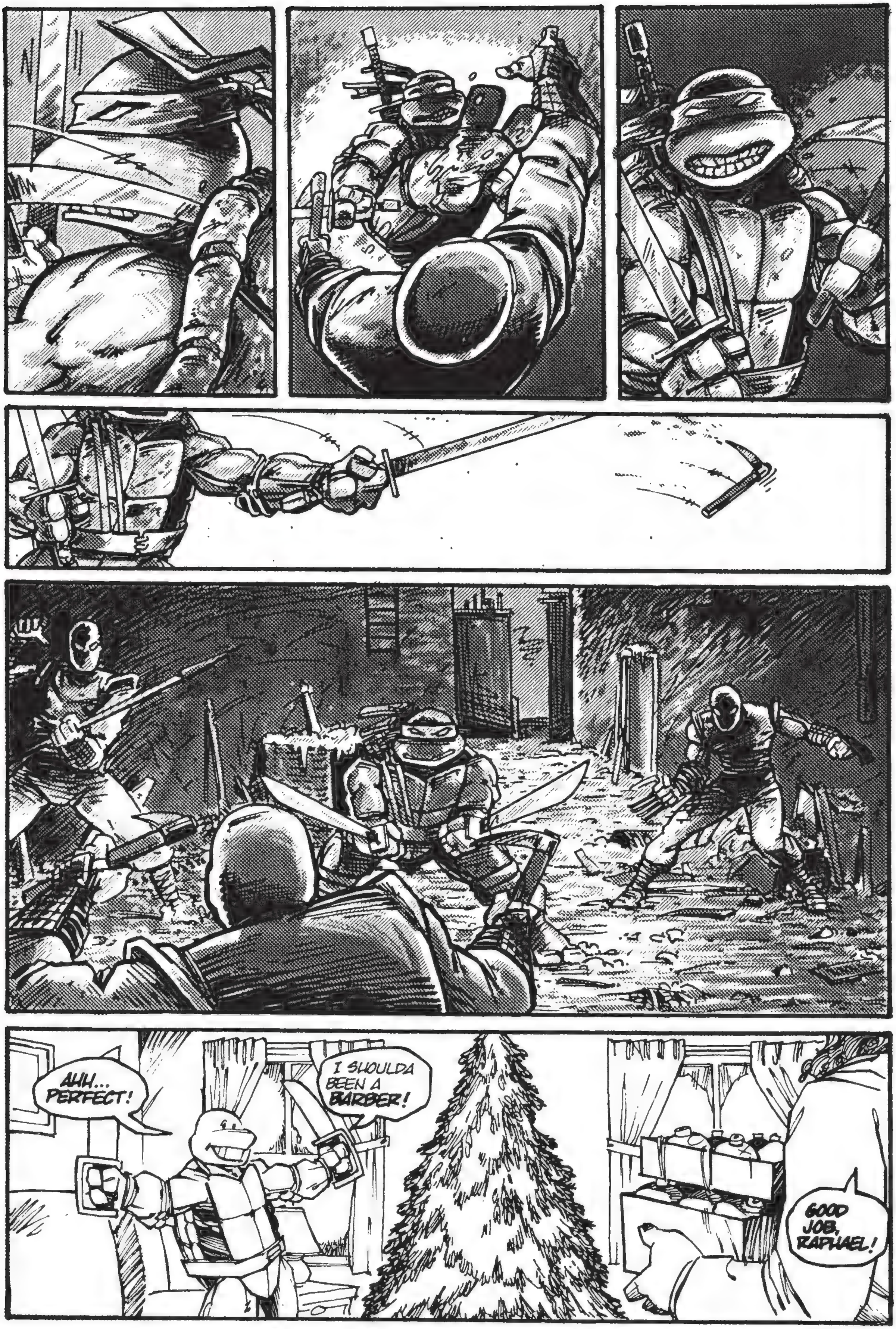


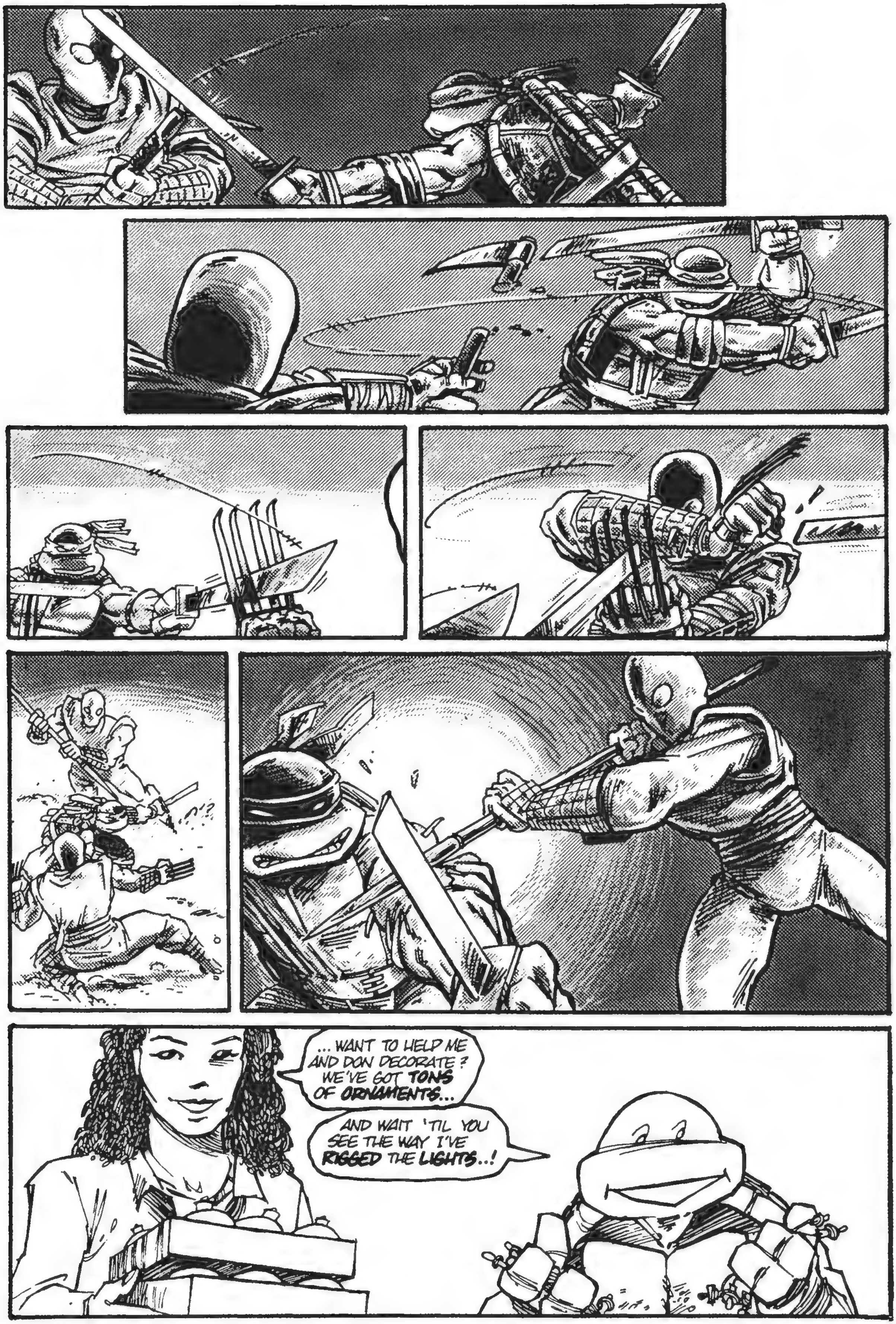


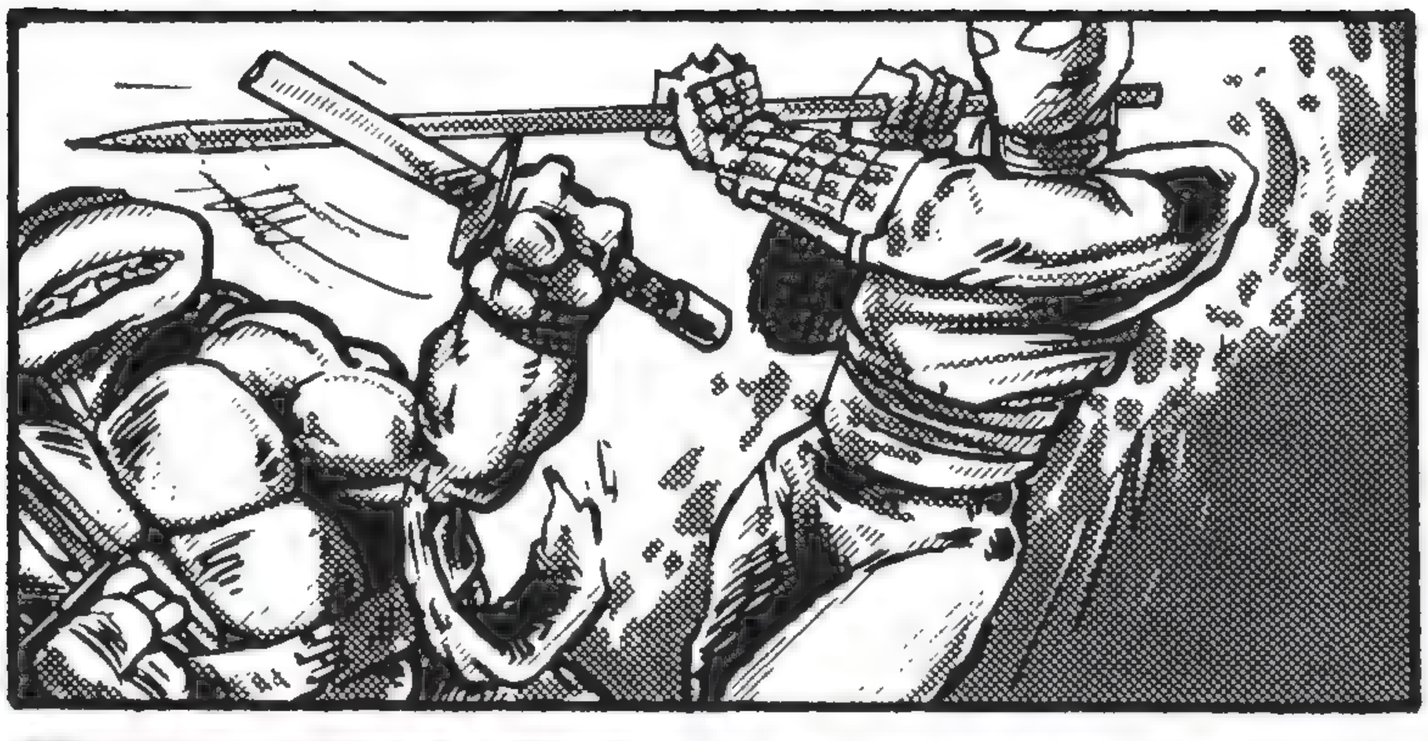


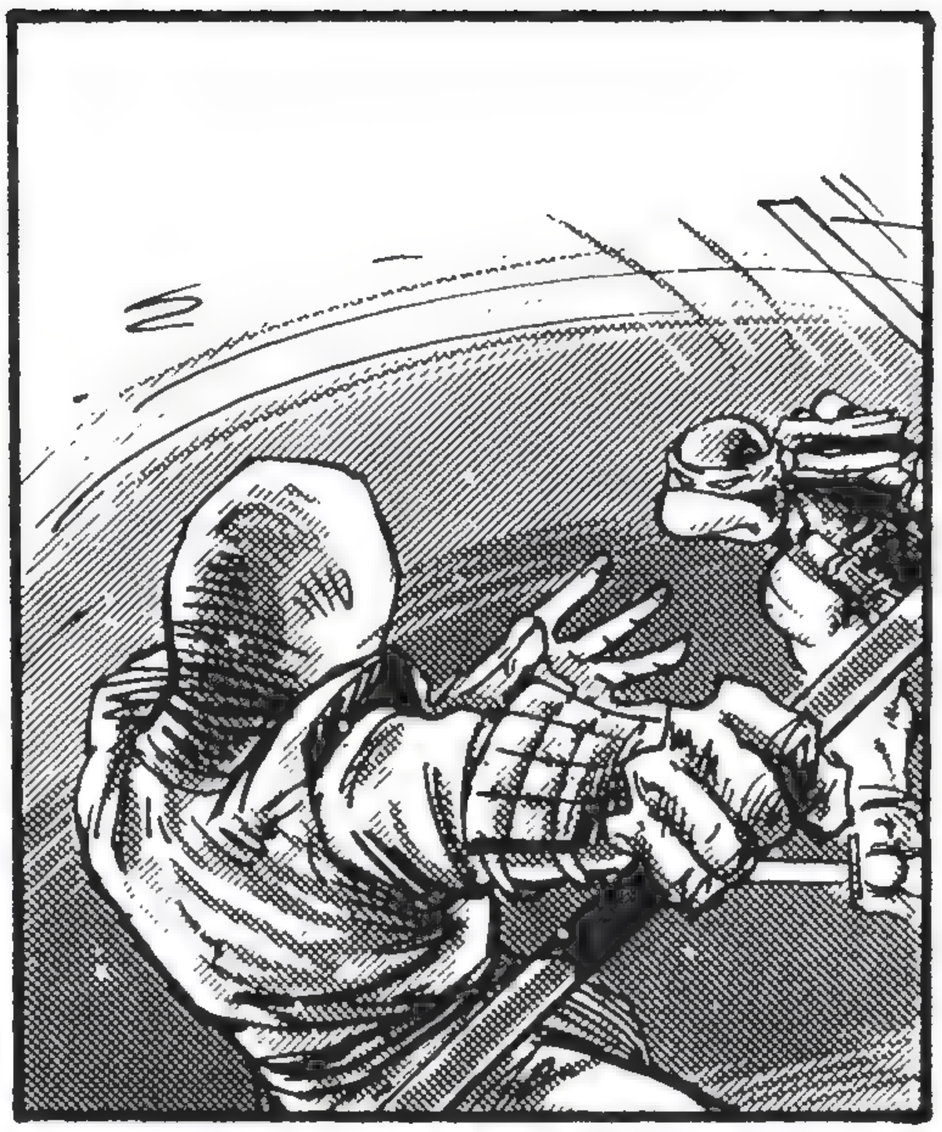


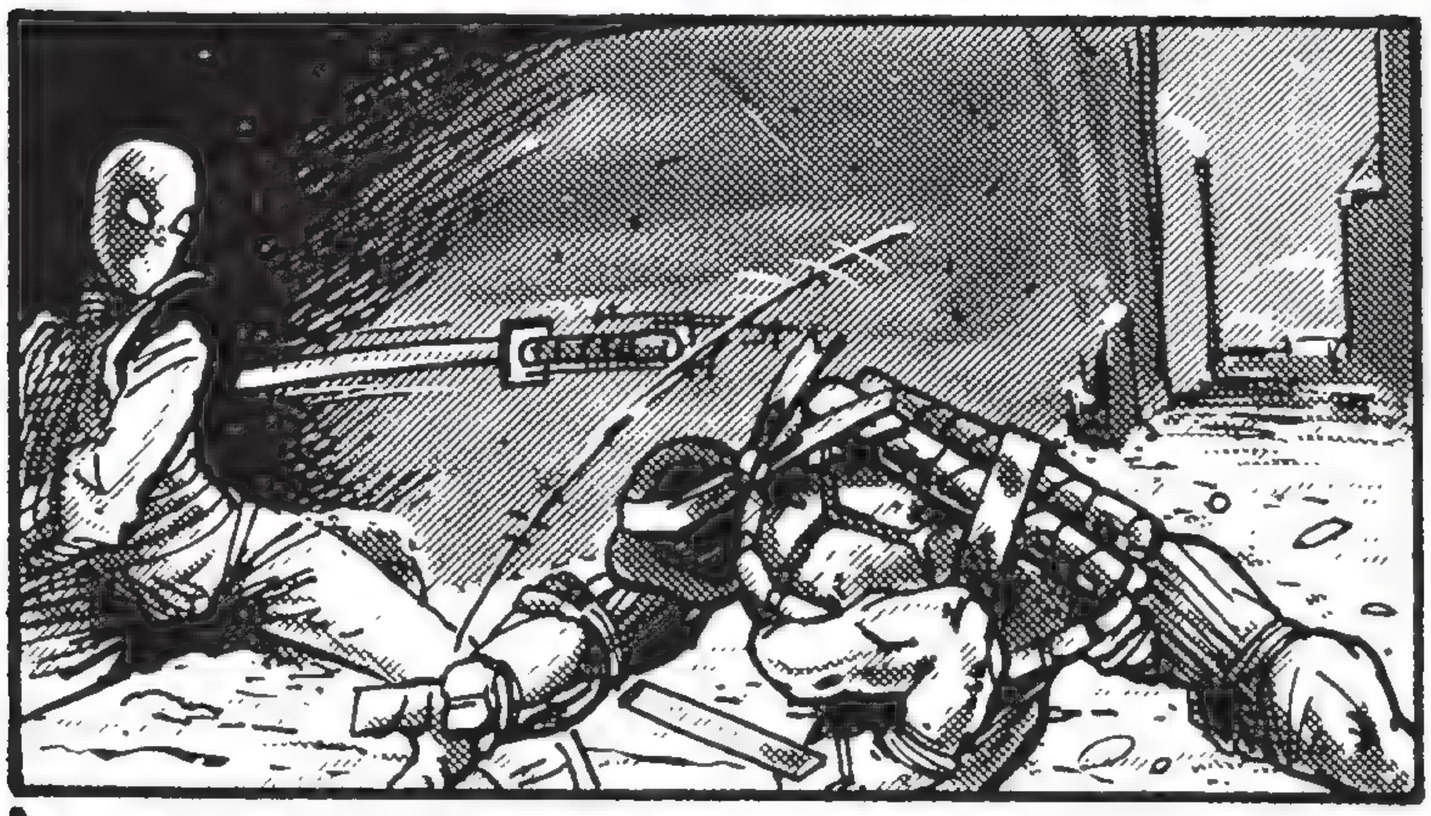

CHOP!
YAAAAAAH!
SLICE
CUT
WHOA!

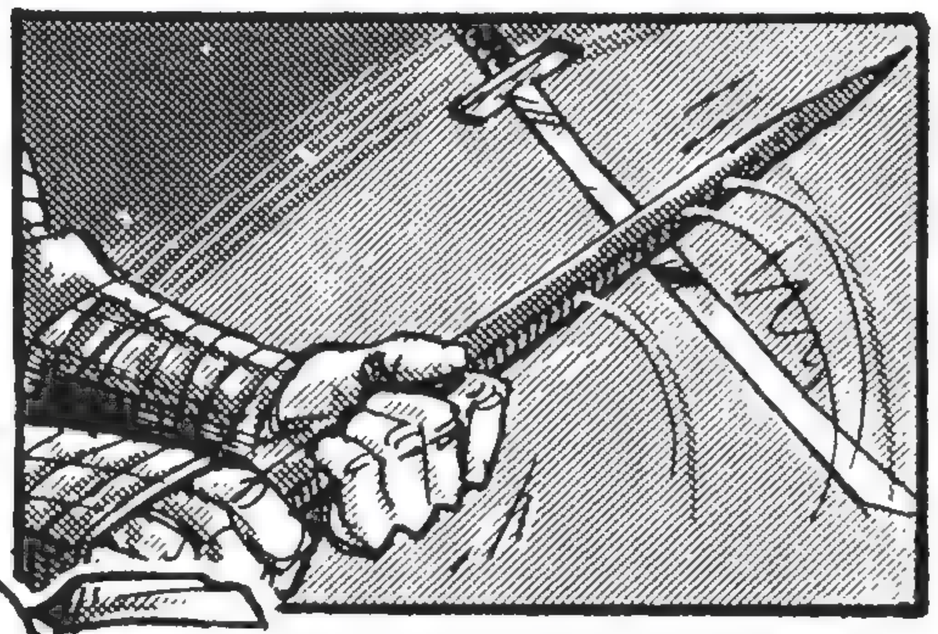

AHH... PERFECT!
I SHOULDA BEEN A BARBER!
GOOD JOB, RAPHAEL!

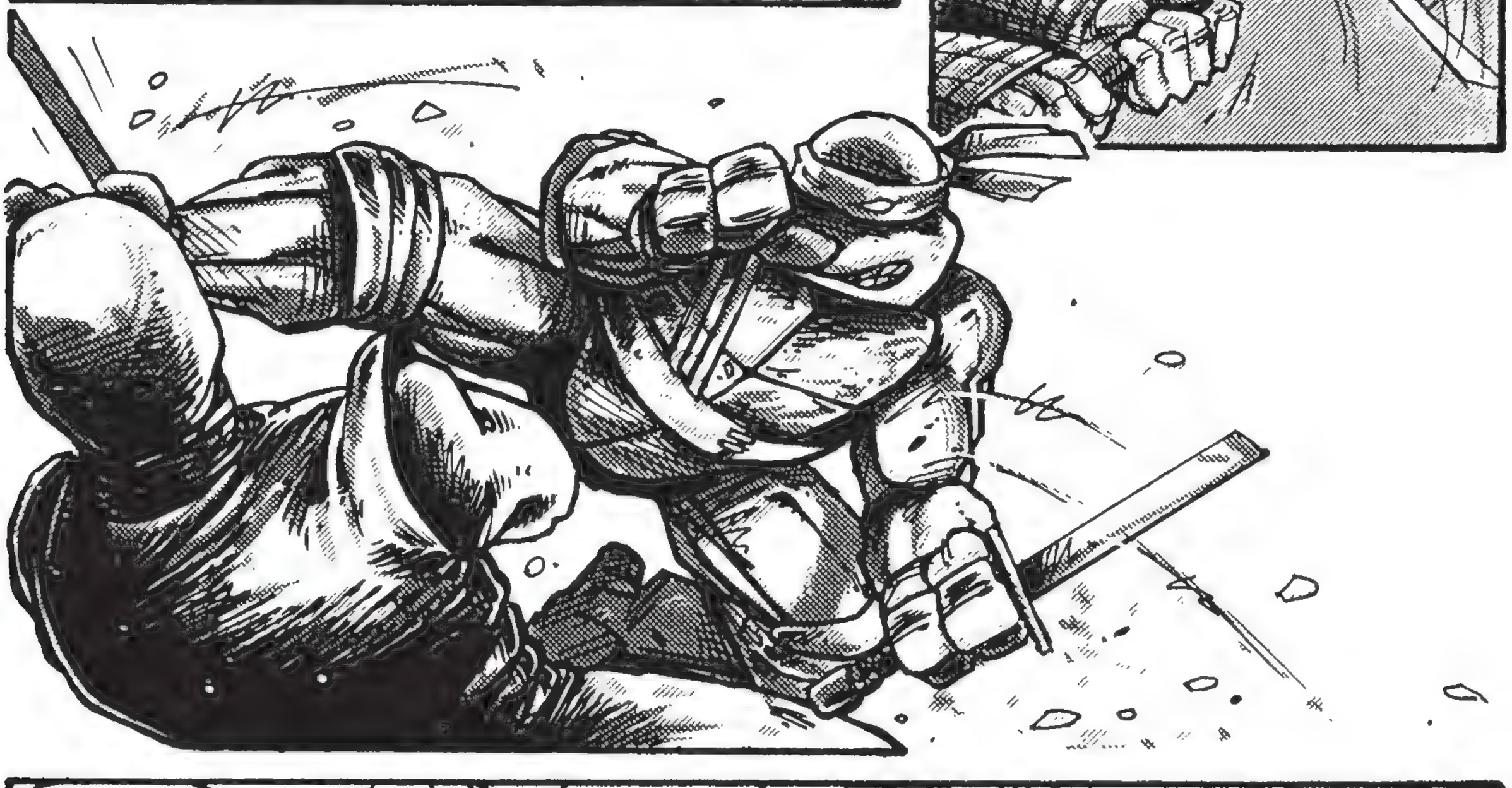

... WANT TO HELP ME AND DON DECORATE? WE'VE GOT TONS OF ORNAMENTS...
AND WAIT 'TIL YOU SEE THE WAY I'VE RIGGED THE LIGHTS..!

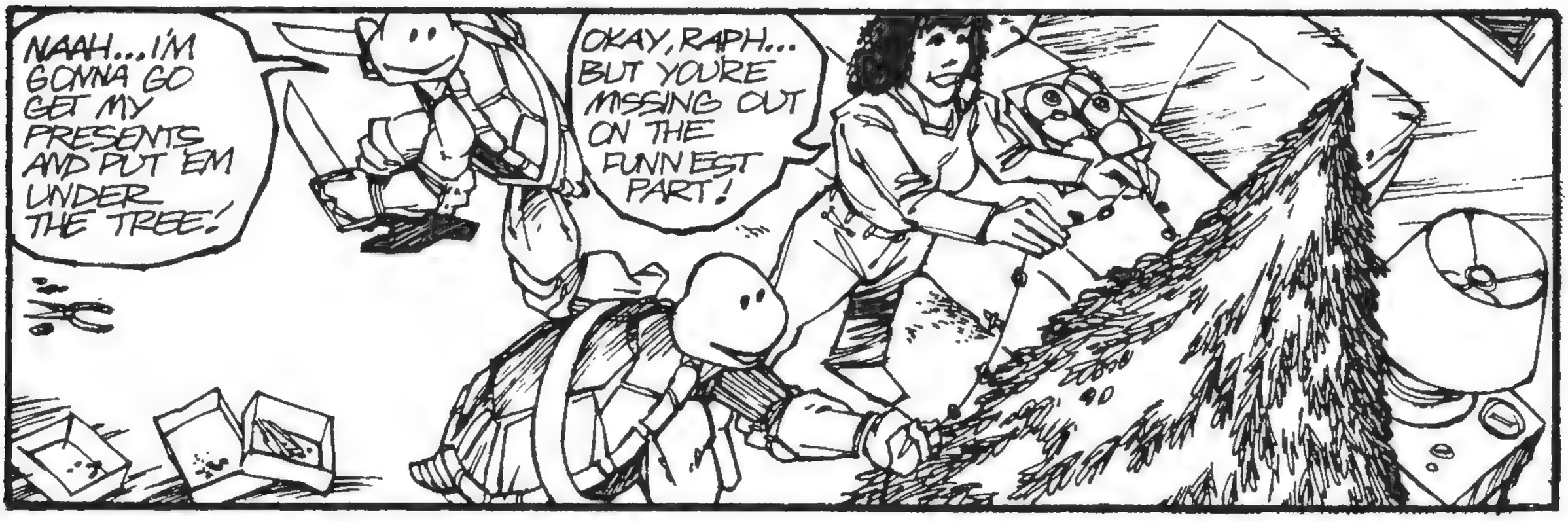


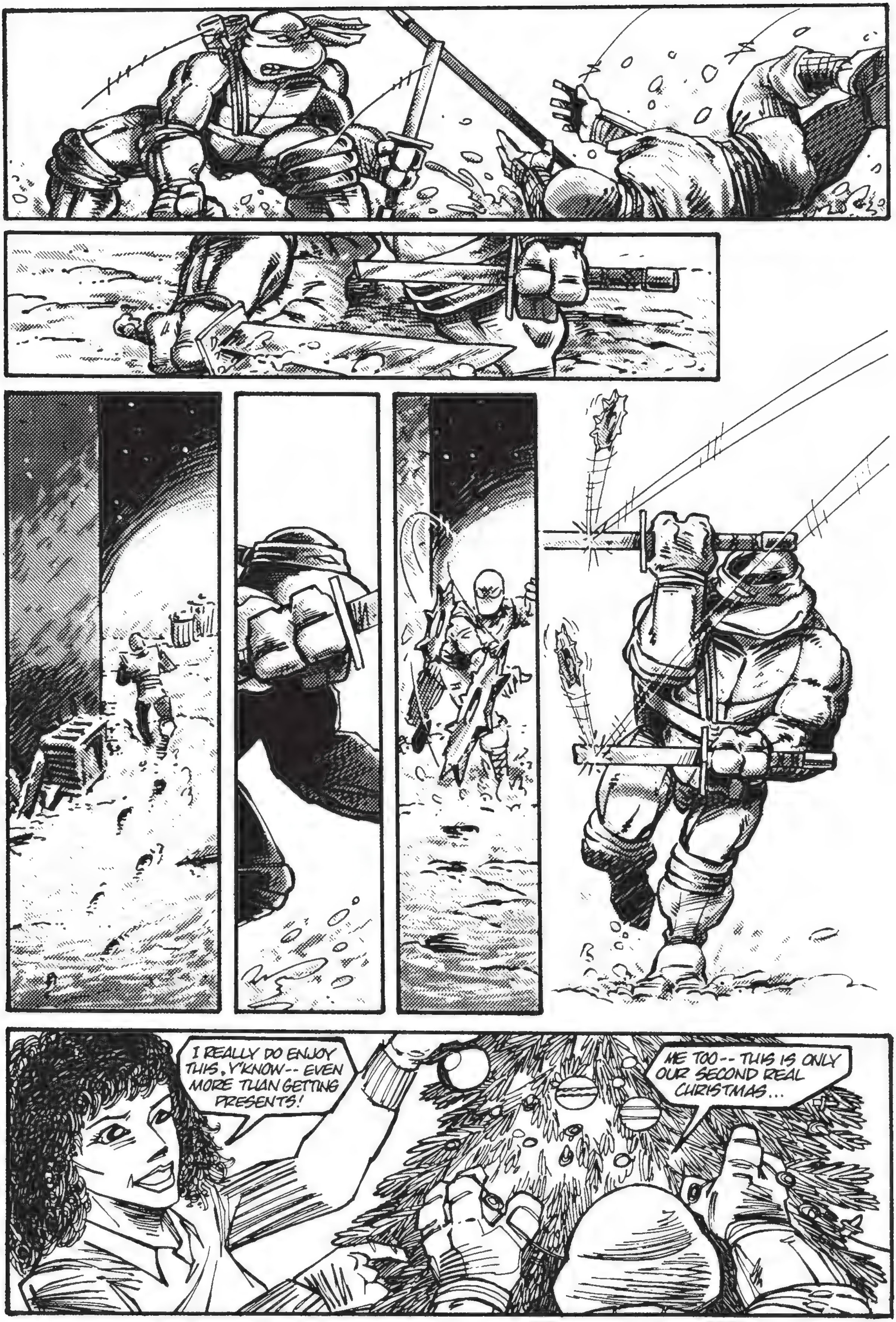


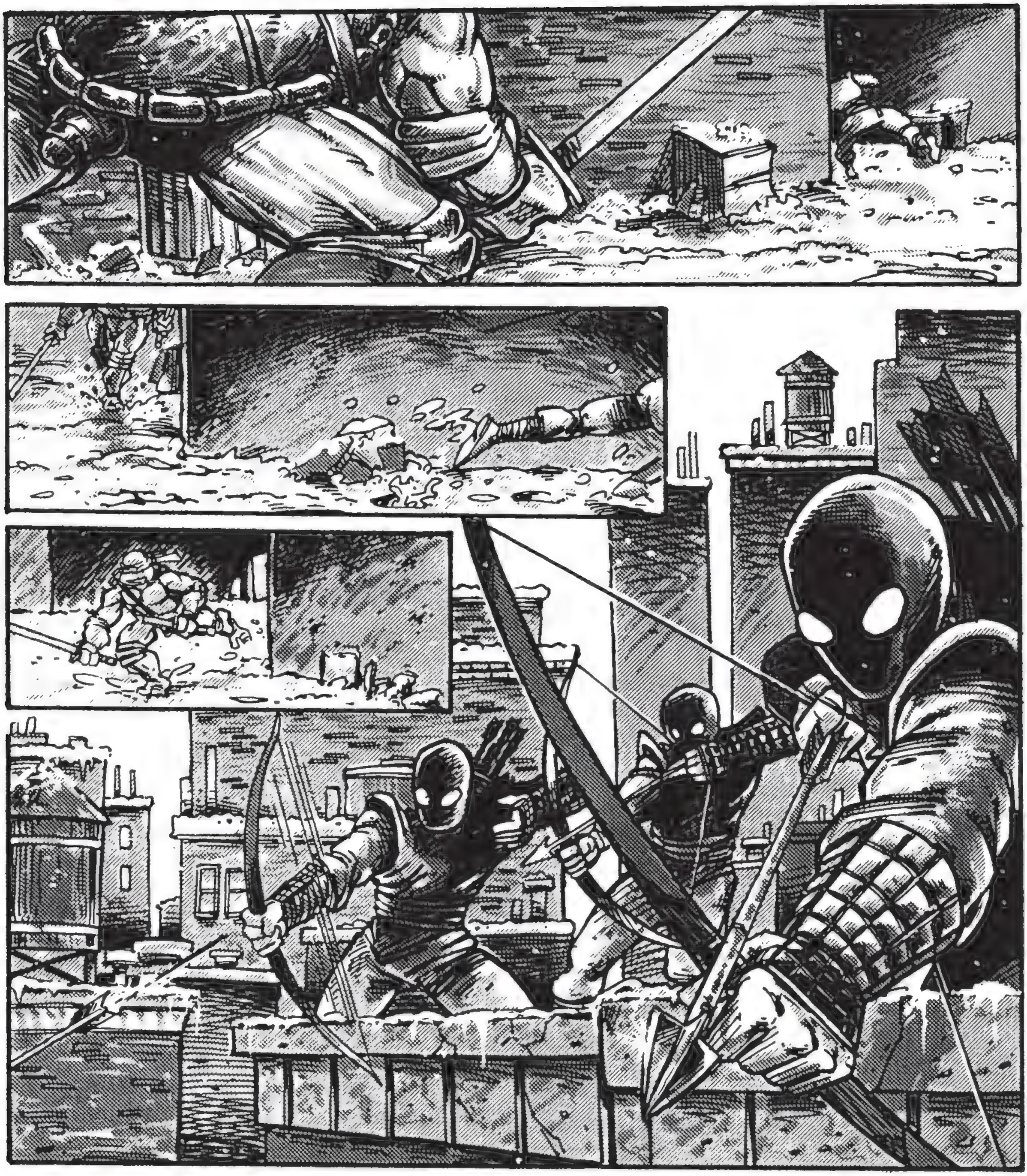




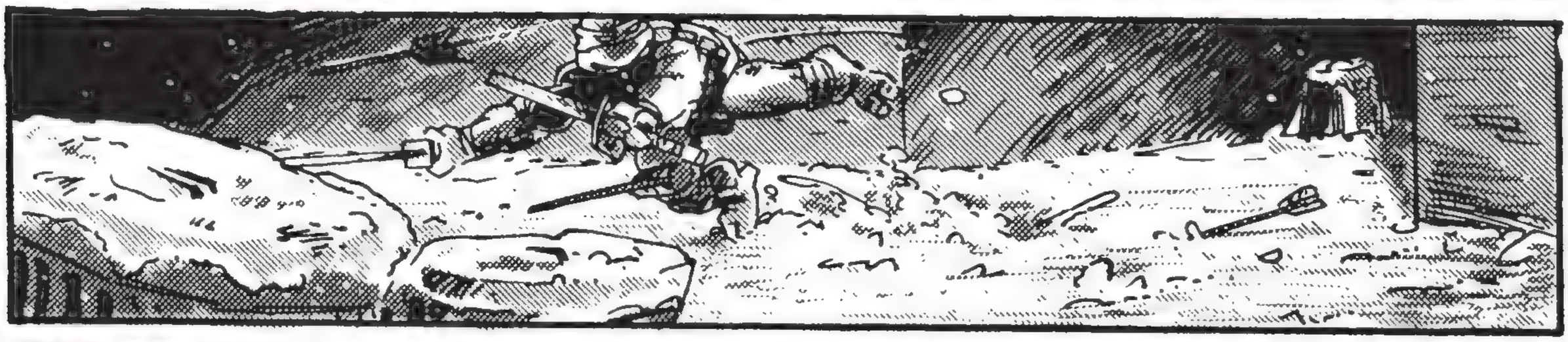


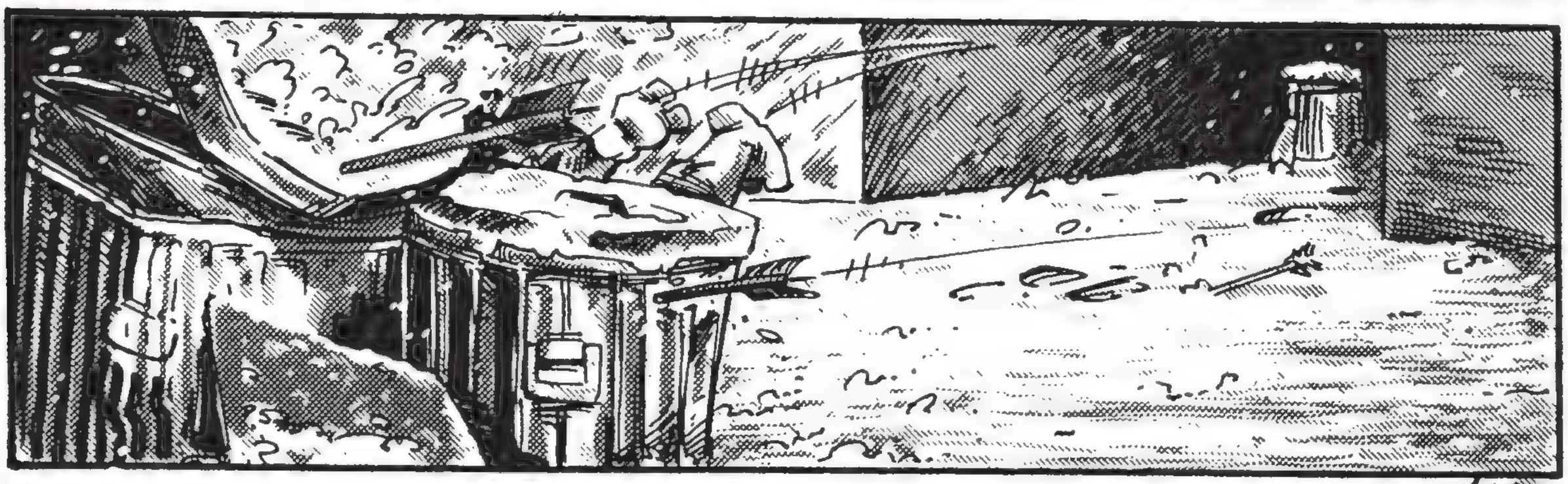

NAAH... I'M GONNA GO GET MY PRESENTS AND PUT 'EM UNDER THE TREE!
OKAY, RAPH... BUT YOU'RE MISSING OUT ON THE FUNNEST PART!


I REALLY DO ENJOY THIS, Y'KNOW-- EVEN MORE THAN GETTING PRESENTS!
ME TOO-- THIS IS ONLY OUR SECOND REAL CHRISTMAS...

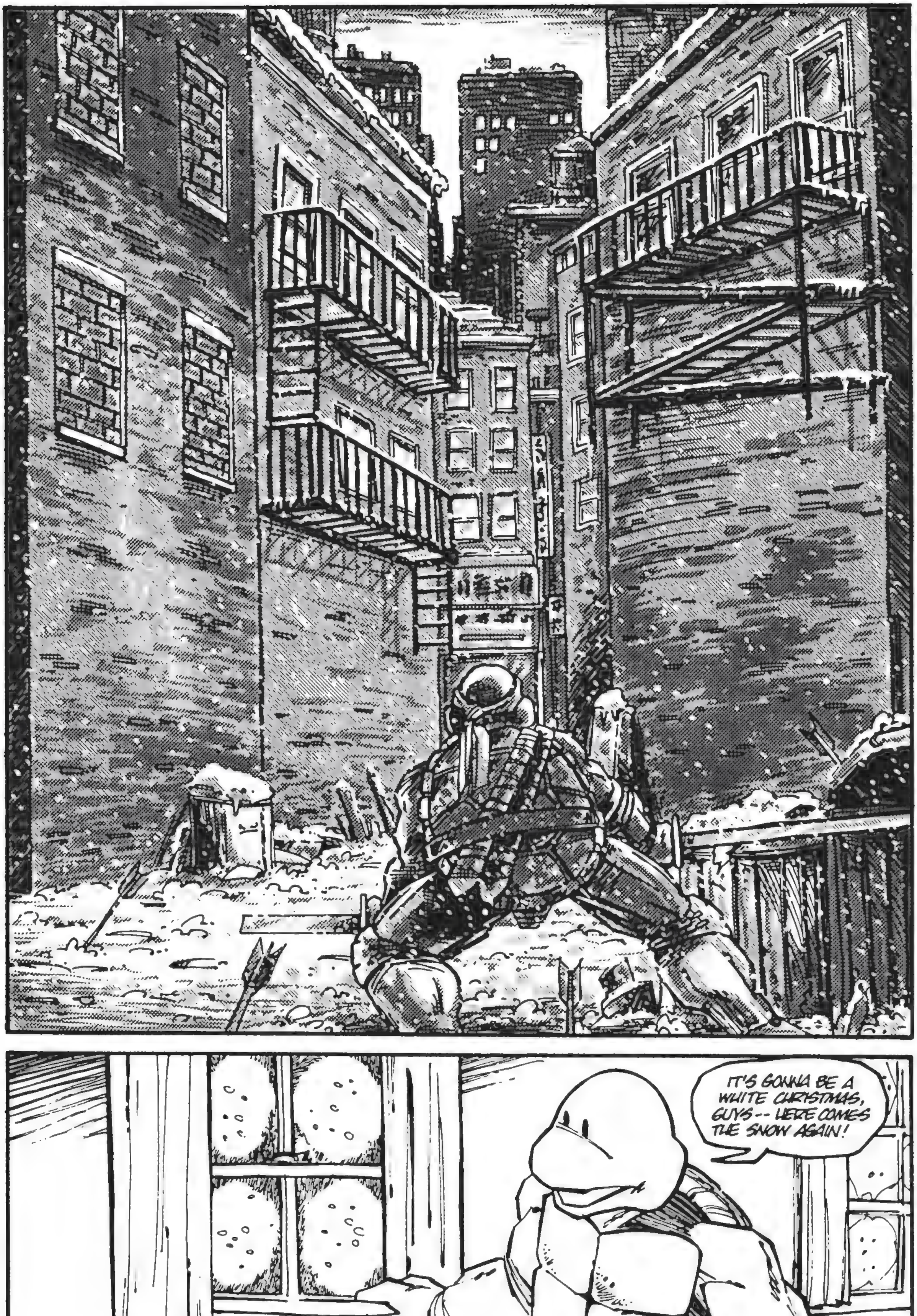


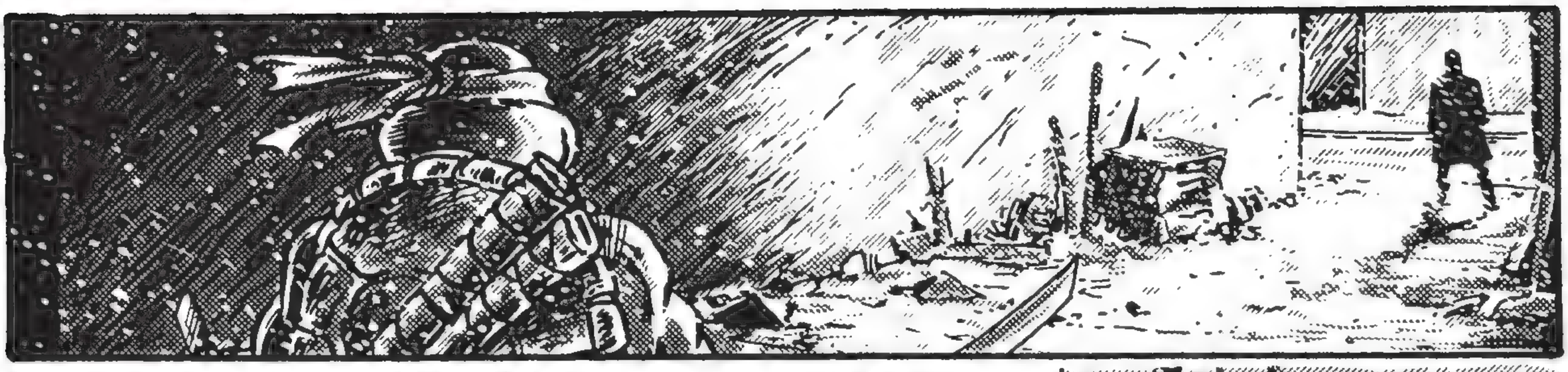
... BUT THIS KIND OF TRADITION I CAN REALLY GET INTO!
WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL, I'D MAKE COOKIE ORNAMENTS WITH MY MOM AND DAD...
THAT SOUNDS LIKE FUN!
...THEN ON CHRISTMAS EVE WE'D SING CAROLS AROUND THE TREE..!
OH, YEAH? YOU MEAN LIKE...

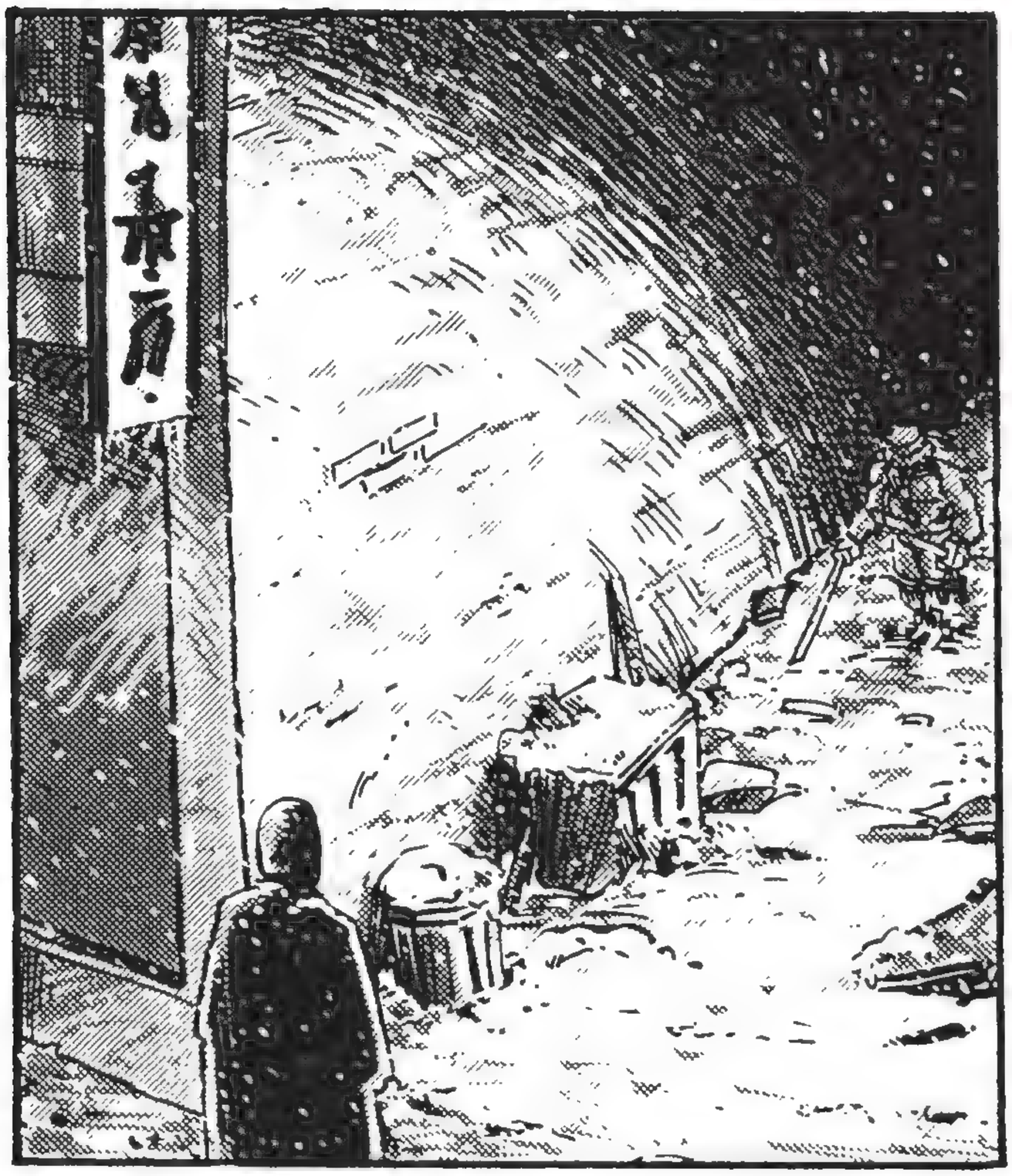


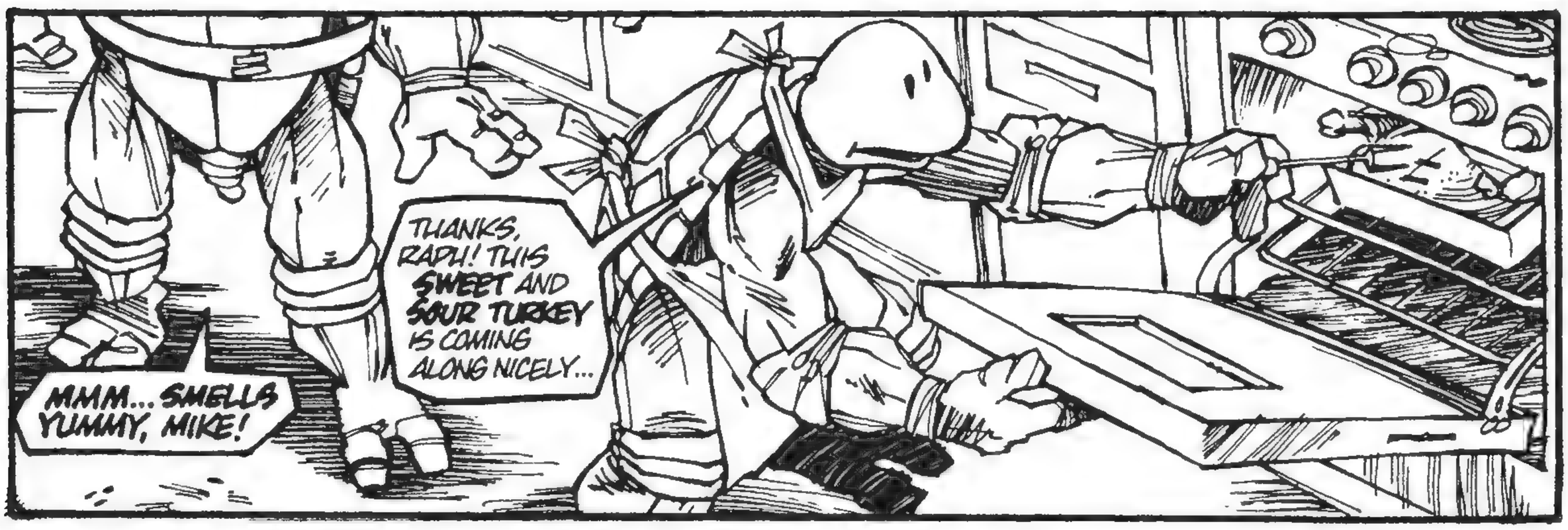


"GOOD KING WENCESLAS WENT OUT, ON THE FEAST OF STEPHEN...
"...WHEN THE SNOW LAY ROUND ABOUT, DEEP AND CRISP AND EVEN!"
"BRIGHTLY SHONE THE MOON THAT NIGHT, THOUGH THE FROST WAS CRUEL..."


IT'S GONNA BE A WHITE CHRISTMAS, GUYS -- HERE COMES THE SNOW AGAIN!



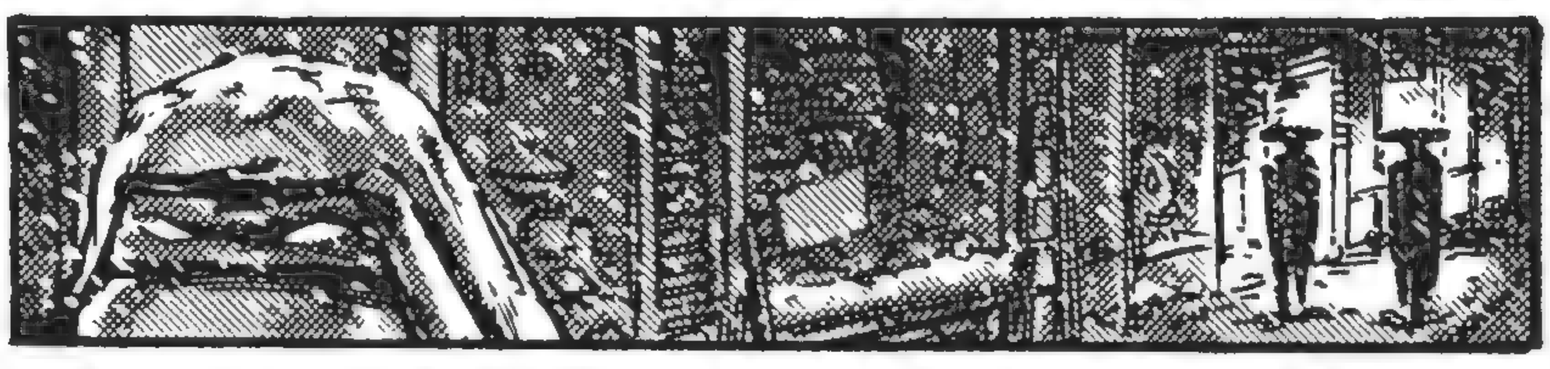


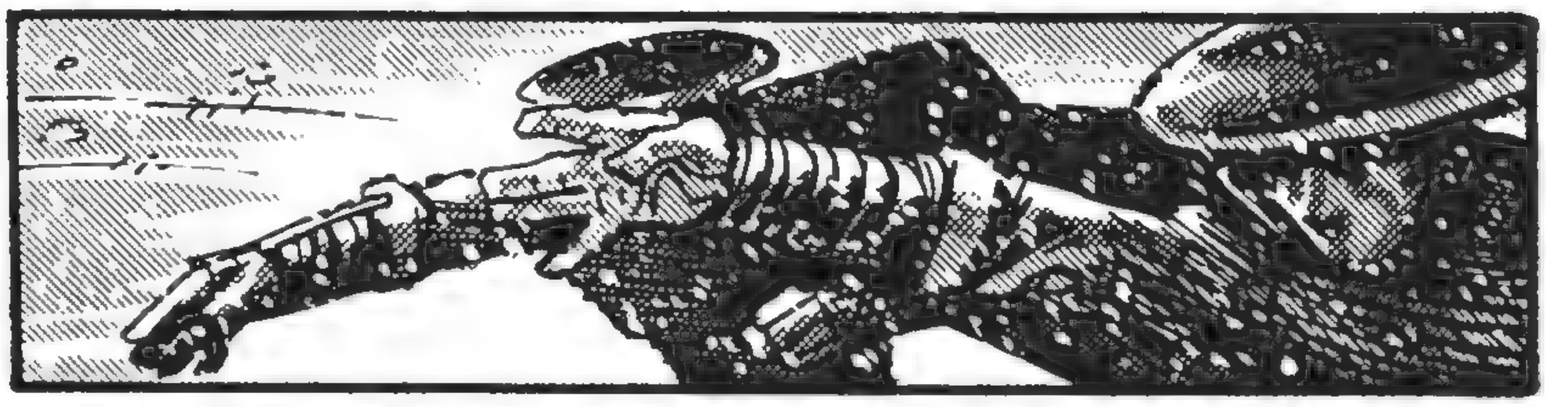

MMM... SMELLS YUMMY, MIKE!
THANKS, RAPH! THIS SWEET AND SOUR TURKEY IS COMING ALONG NICELY...

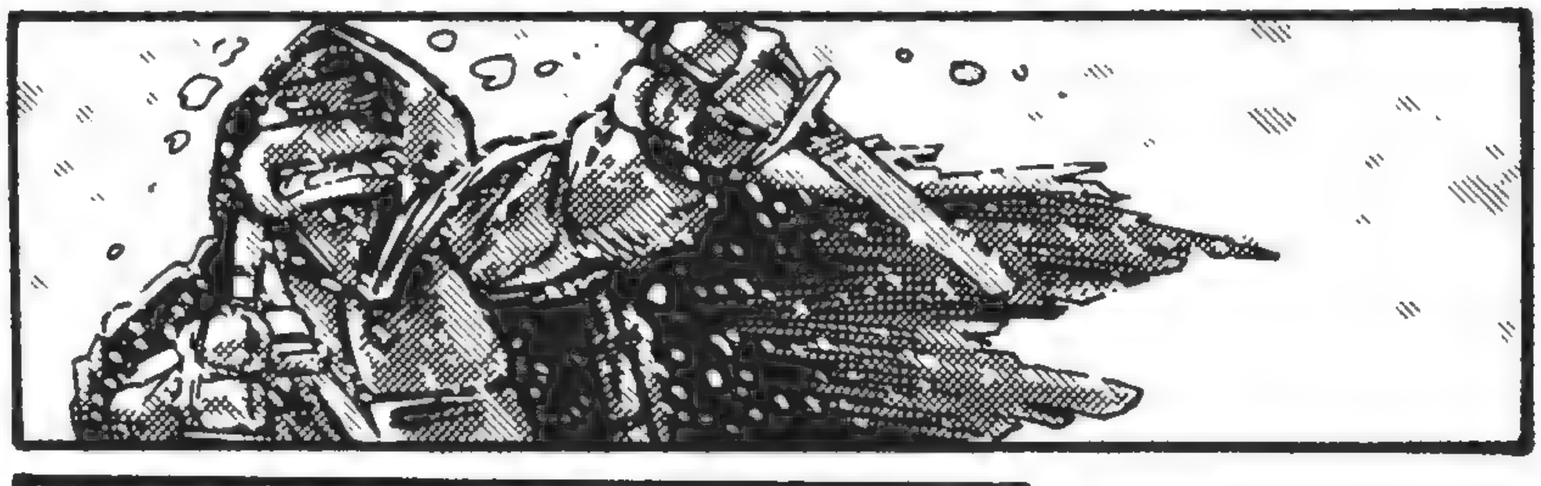
ANY SIGN OF LEO YET?

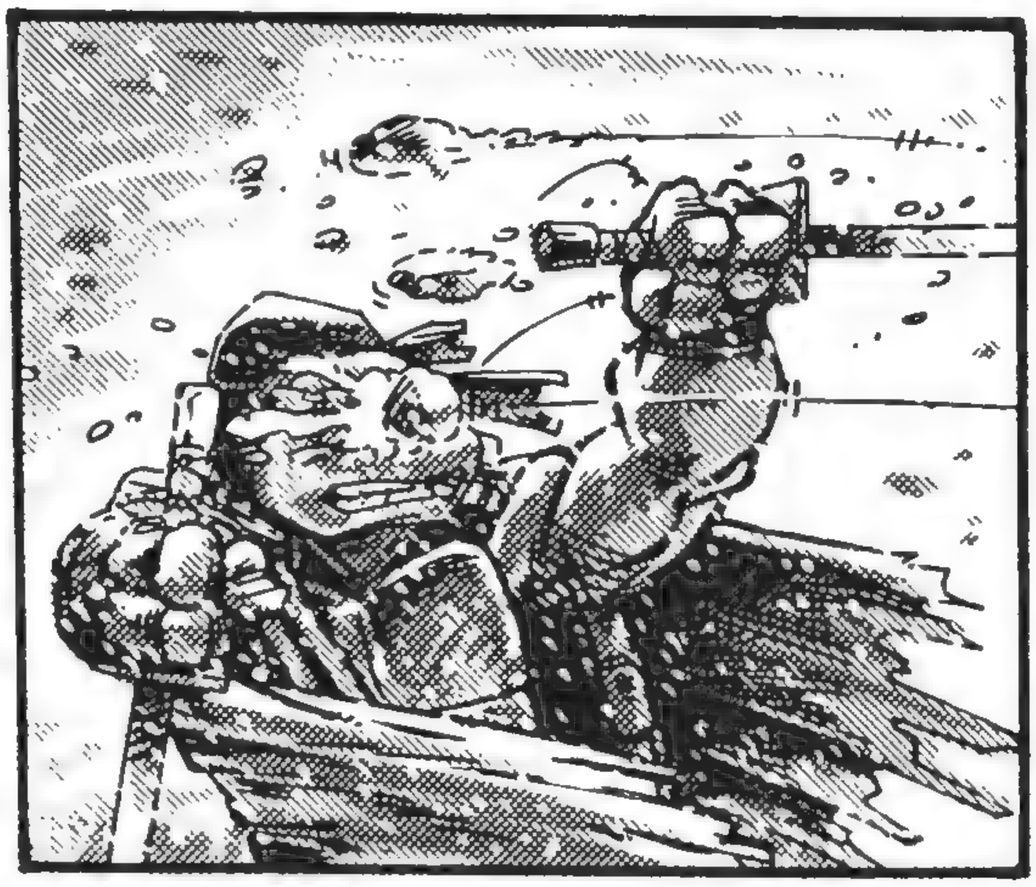
NAAH... BUT DON'T WORRY-- LEO'S ALWAYS ON TIME. "MR. PERFECTION", REMEMBER?

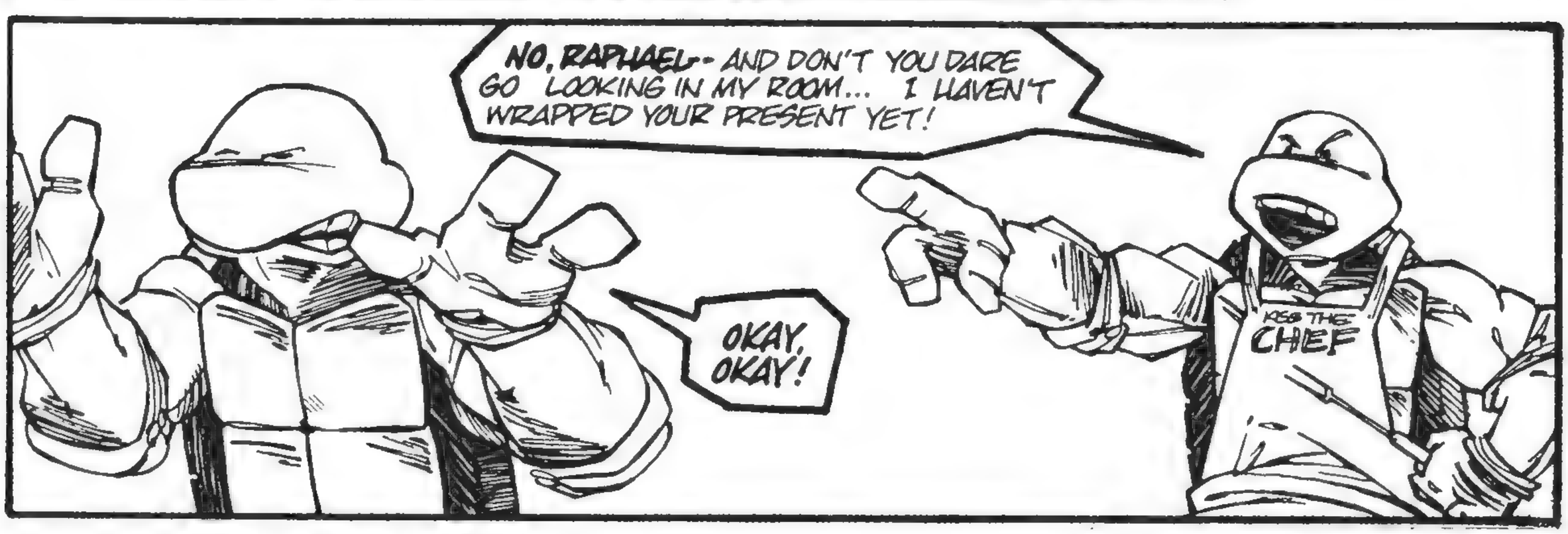
BUT HEY-- I'M GONNA PUT MY PRESENTS UNDER THE TREE -- YA WANT ME TO GET YOURS?

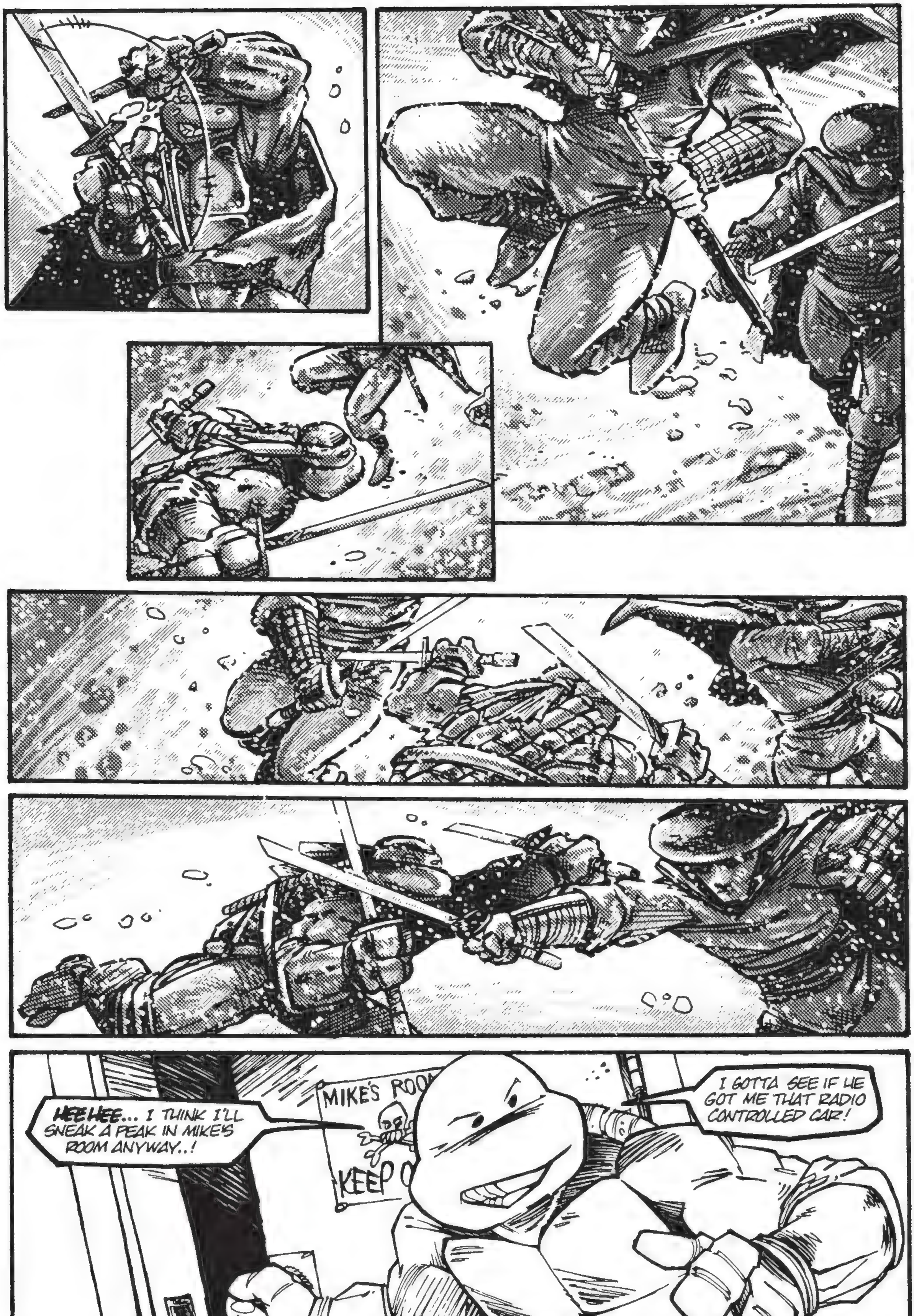


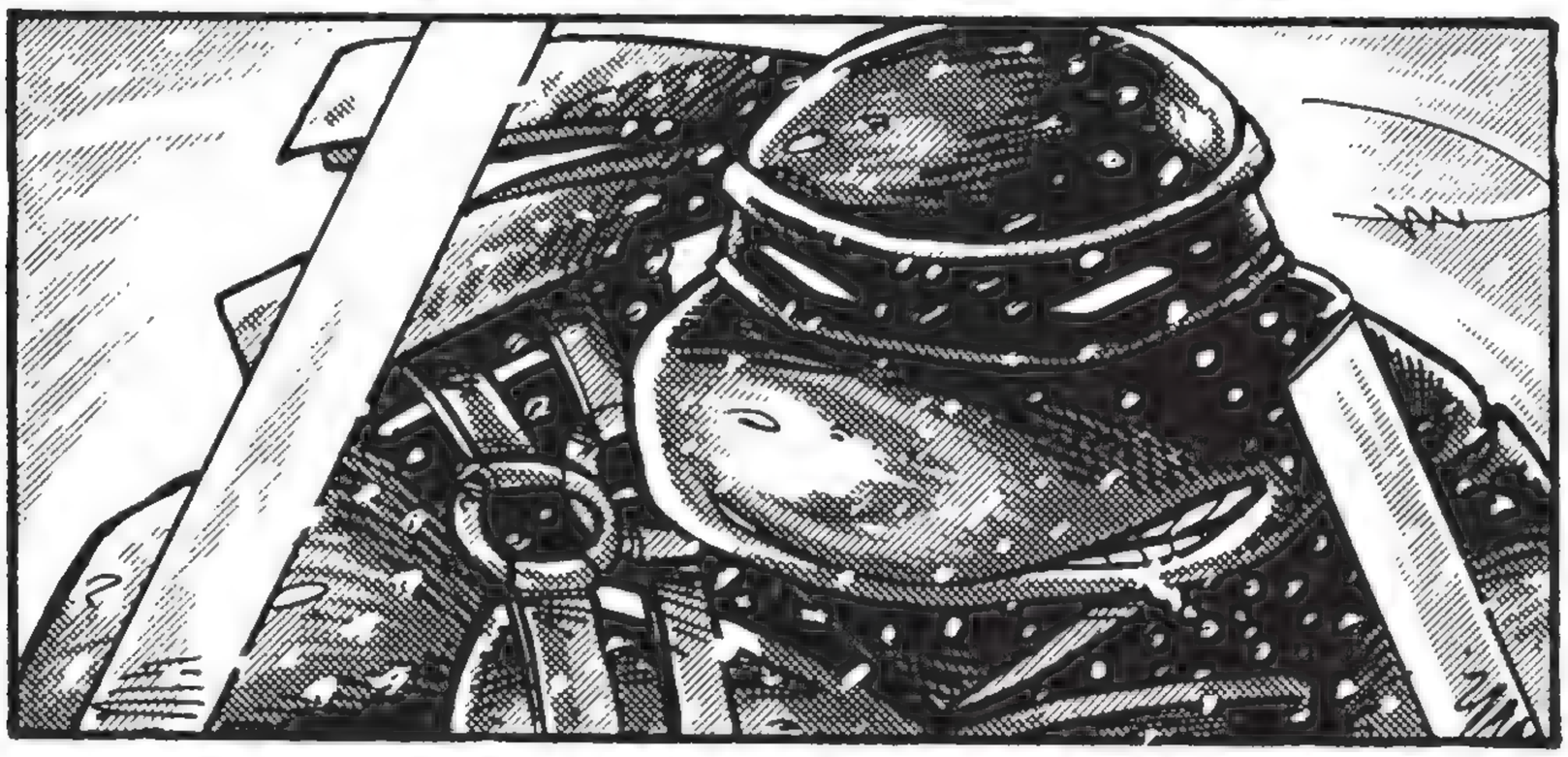


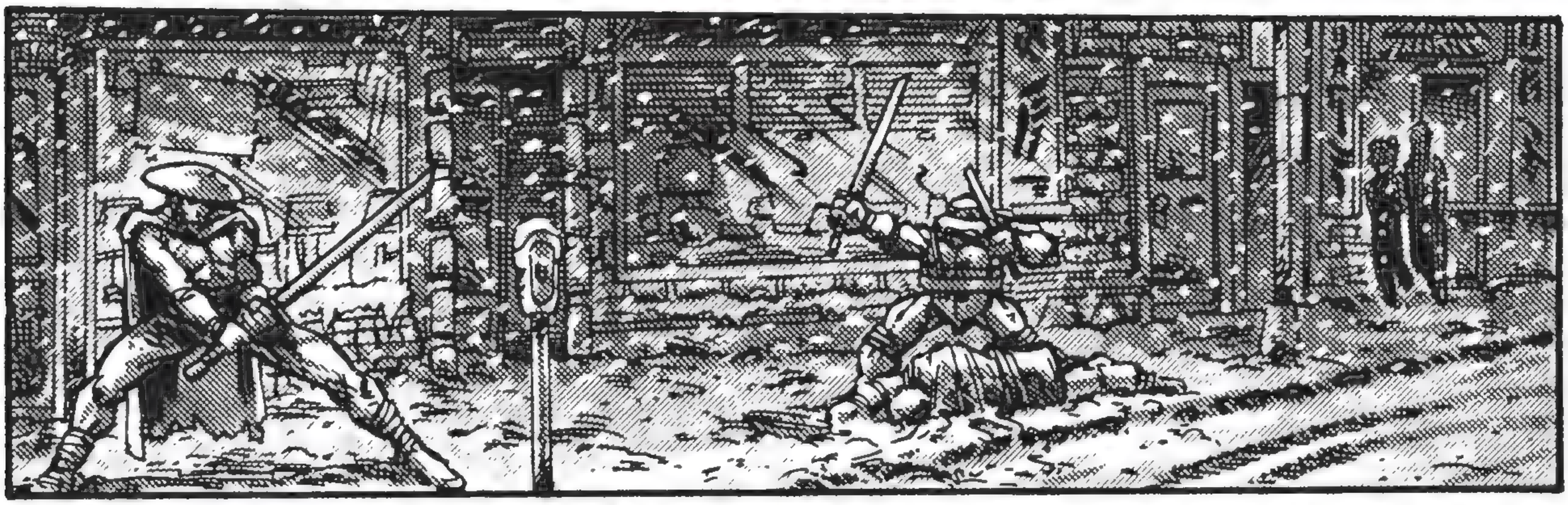





NO, RAPHAEL - AND DON'T YOU DARE GO LOOKING IN MY ROOM... I HAVEN'T WRAPPED YOUR PRESENT YET!
OKAY, OKAY!
KISS THE CHEF


HEE HEE... I THINK I'LL SNEAK A PEAK IN MIKE'S ROOM ANYWAY..!
MIKE'S ROO
KEEP O
I GOTTA SEE IF HE GOT ME THAT RADIO CONTROLLED CAR!

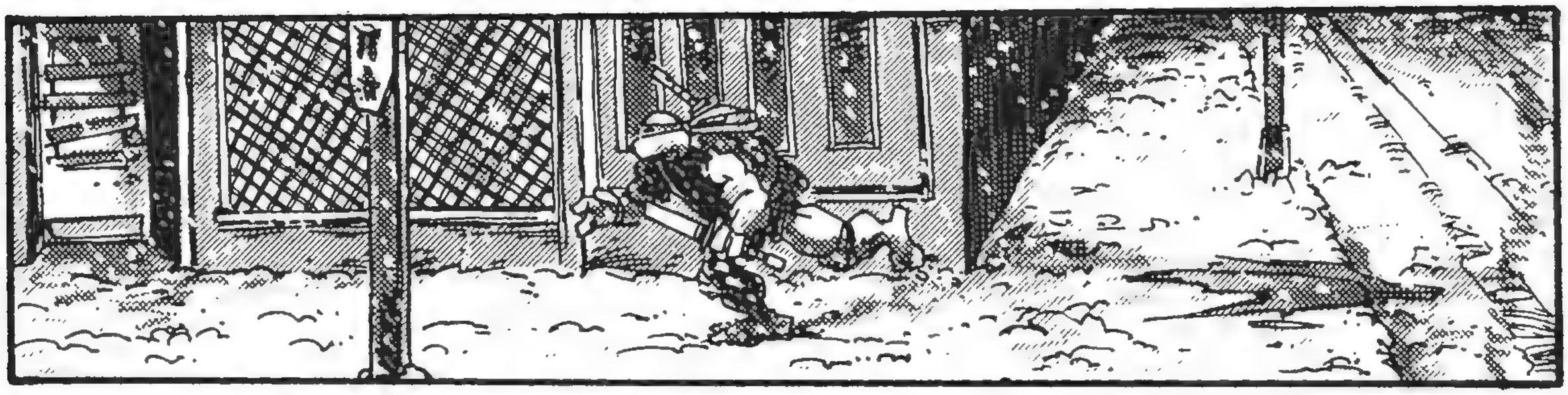


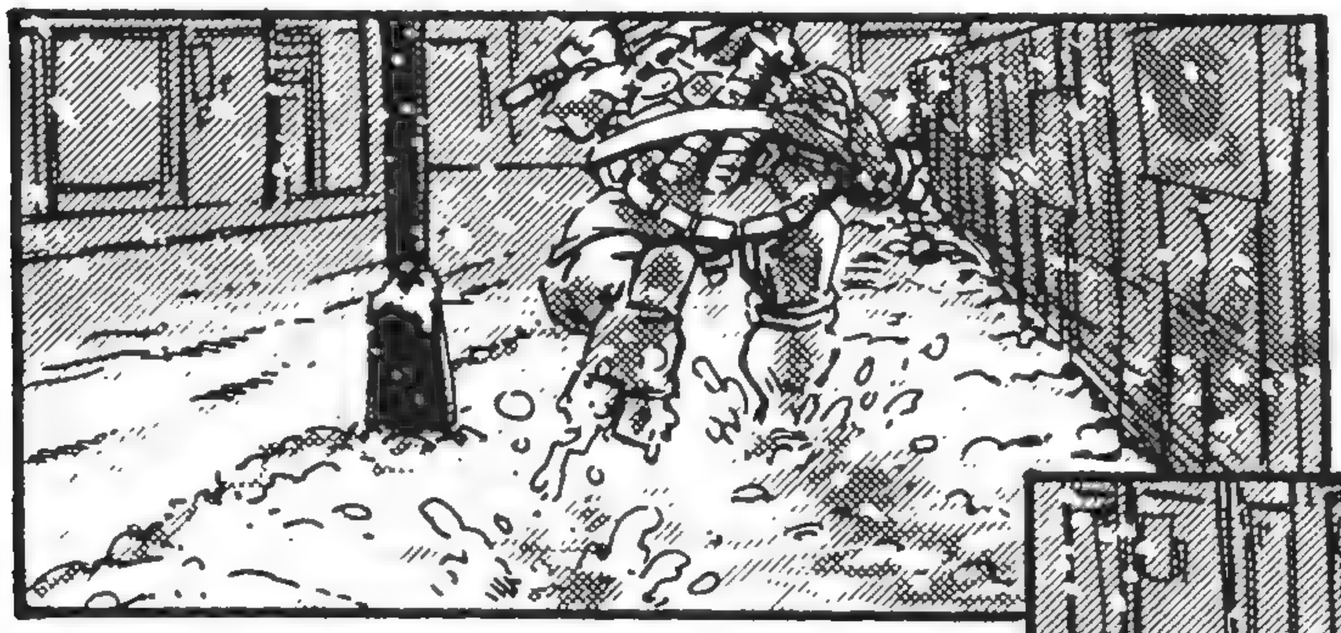


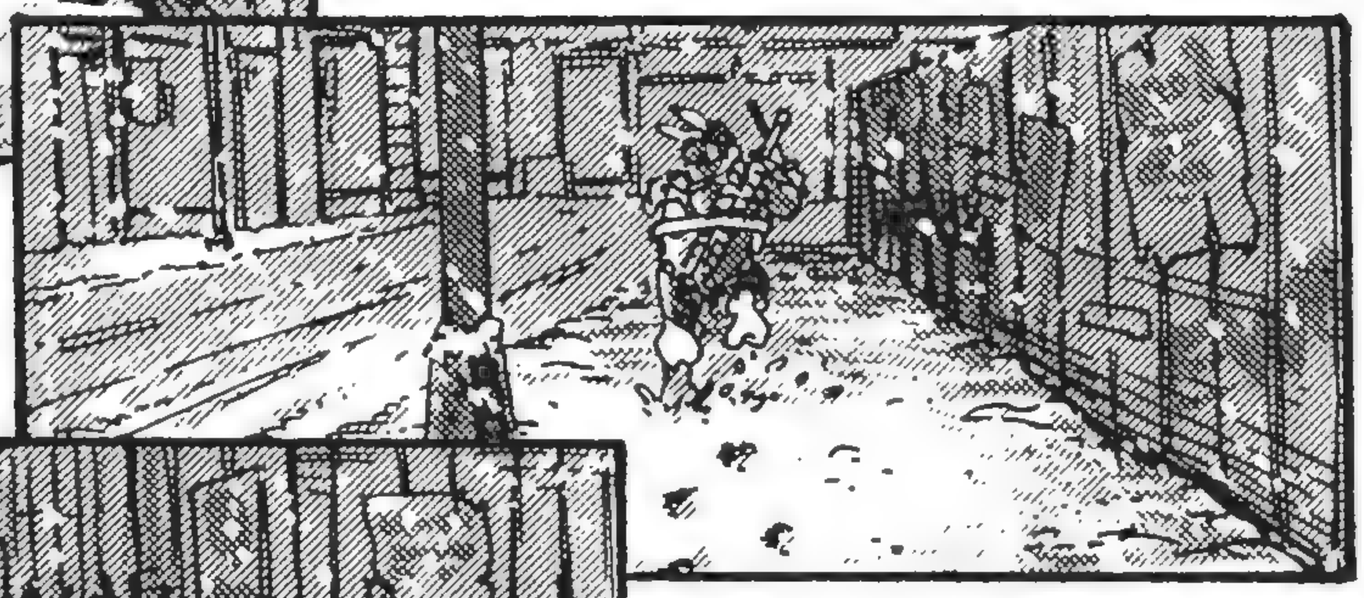
YOW!
BEAOORR!!

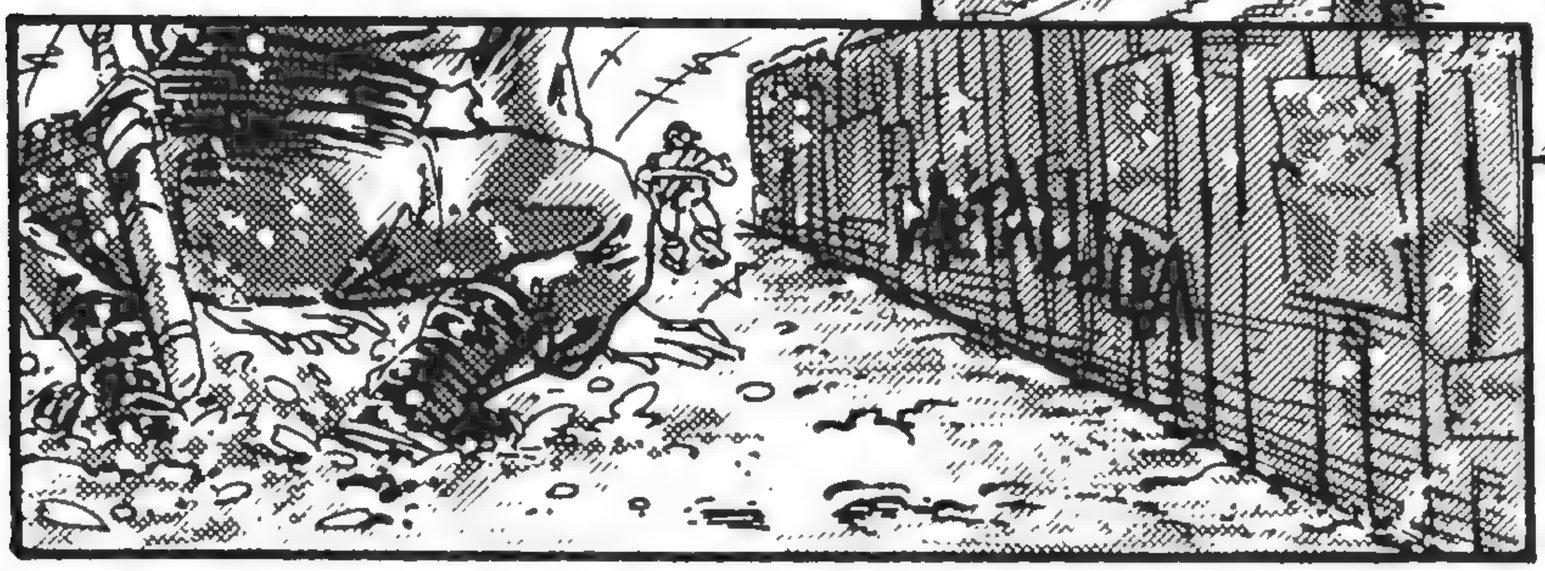
ROWR?
OK, YOU WIN... I WON'T PEEK AT MIKE'S STUFF!
HAH! YA GOT ME, KLUNK -- YOU'RE A TOP-NOTCH GUARD KITTY!

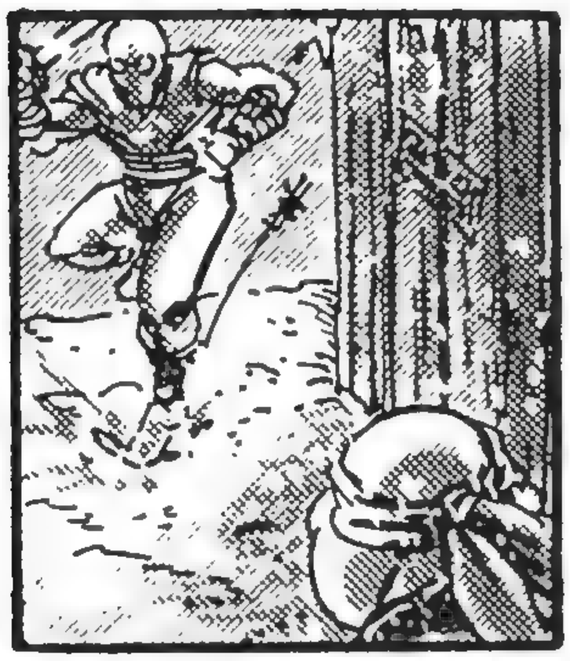
THANKS FOR HELPING ARRANGE THE ORNAMENTS, SPLINTER -- YOU SURE HAVE AN EYE FOR IT!

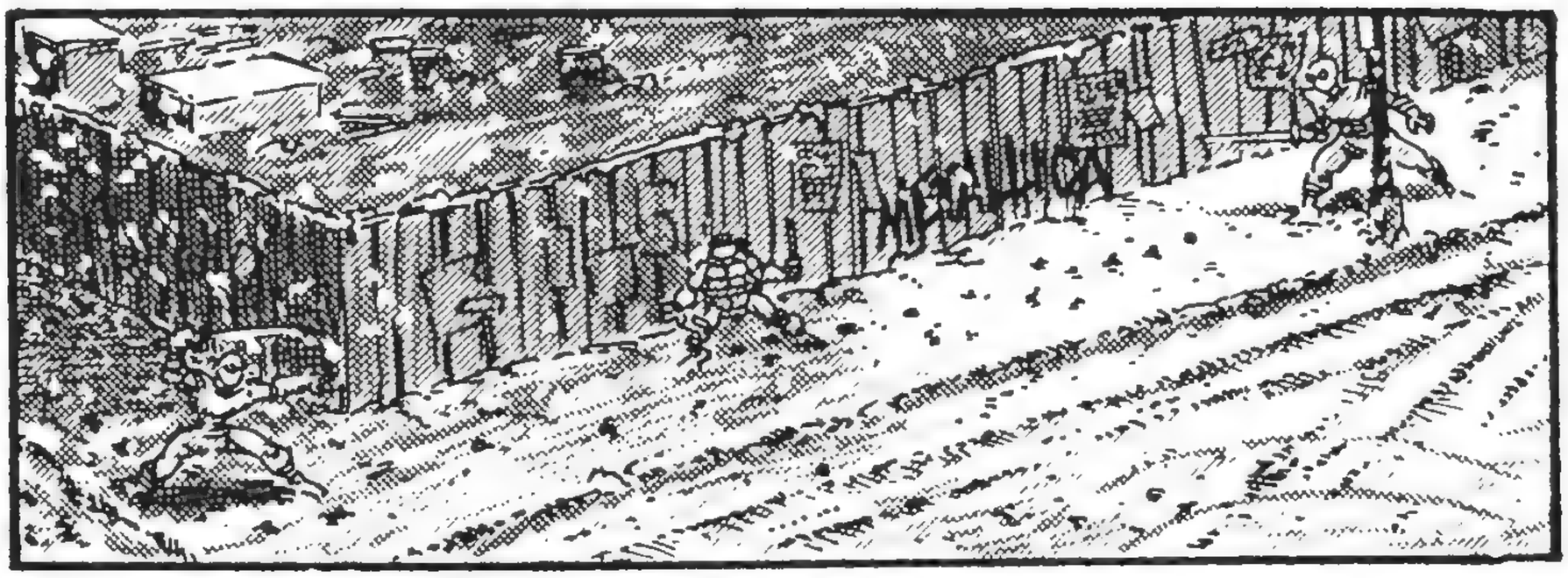




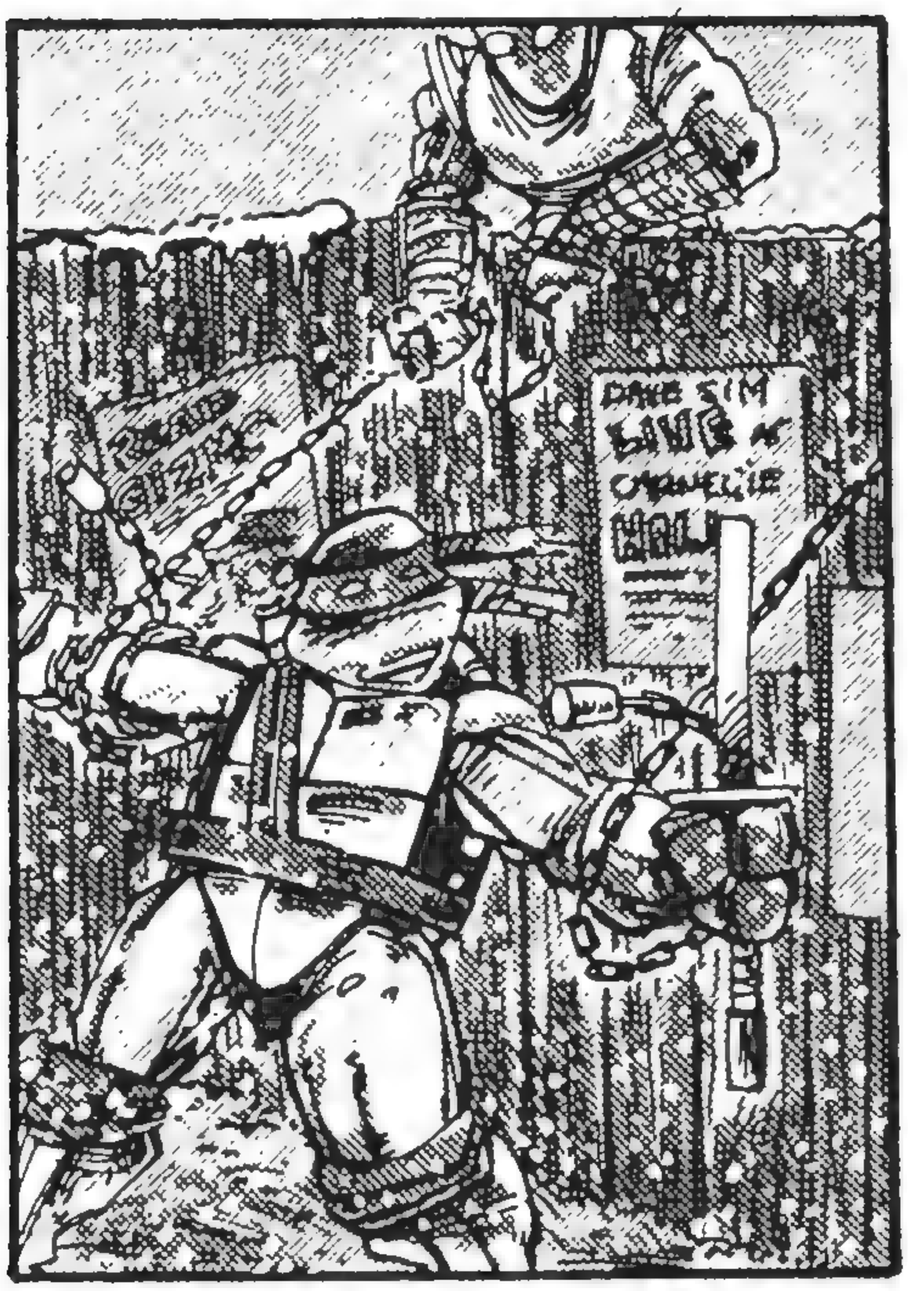


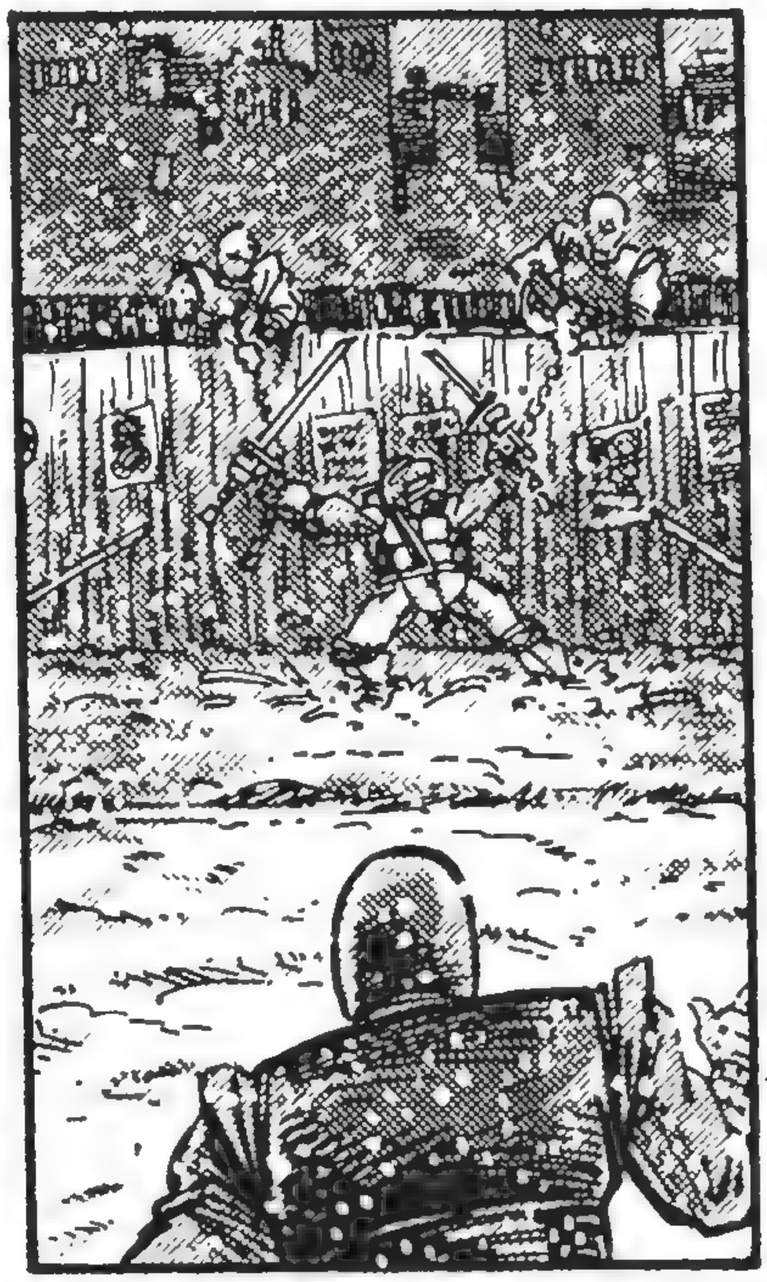




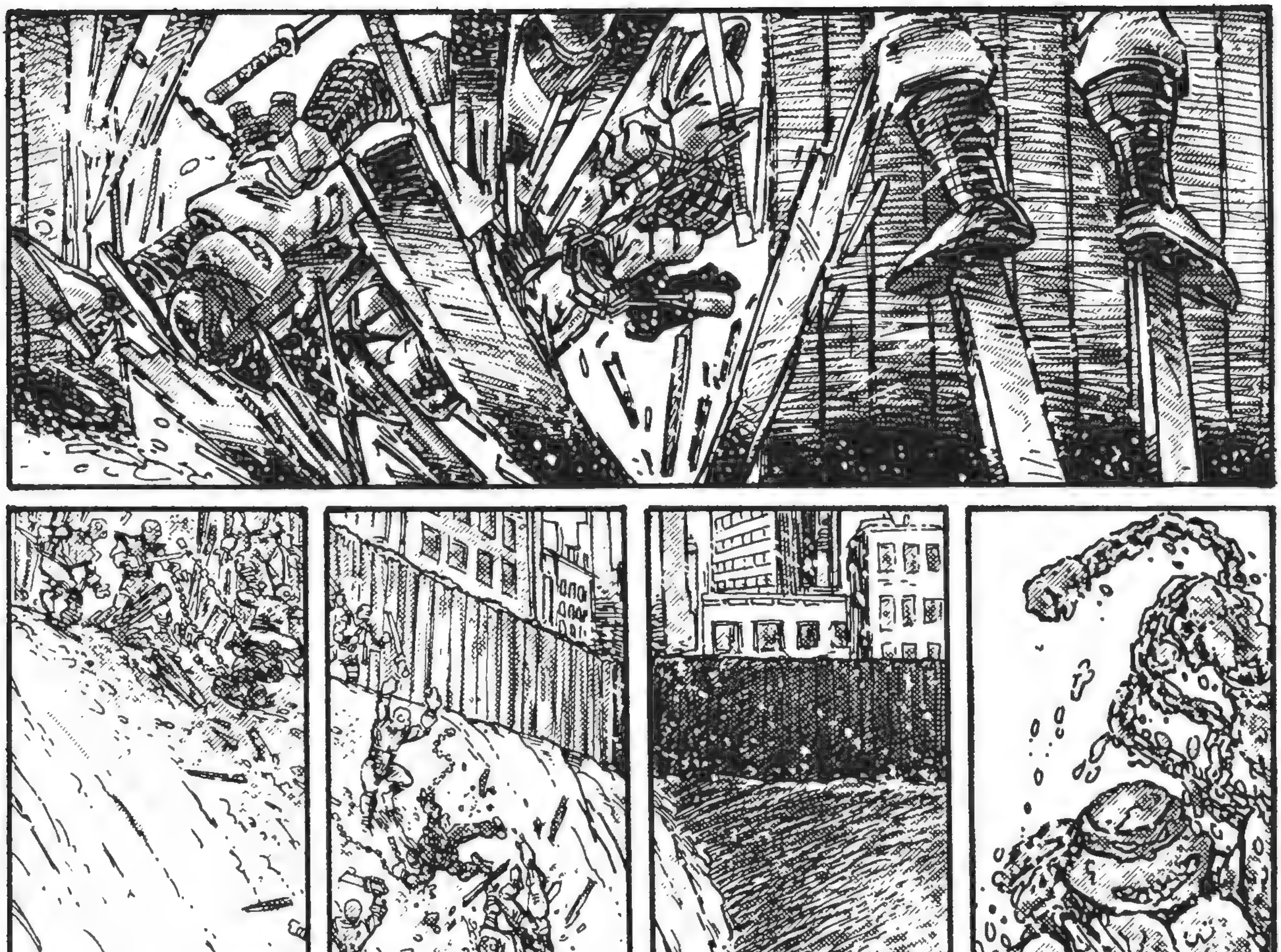


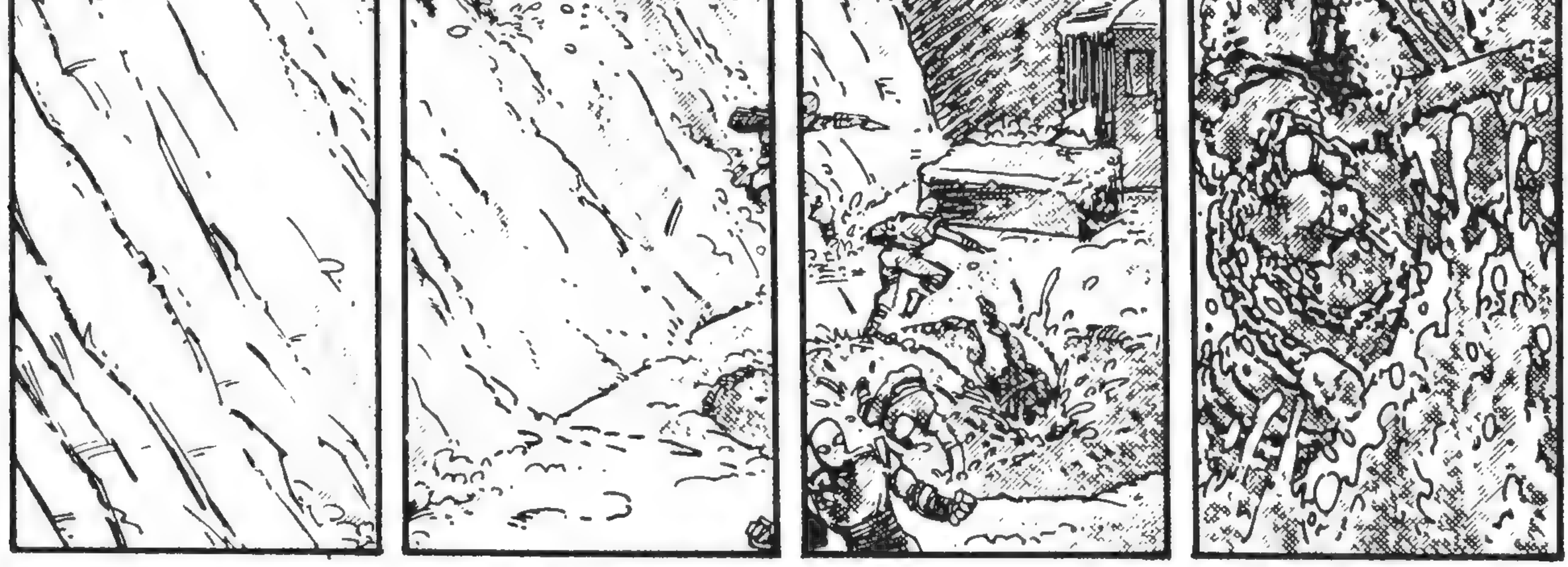
I ONLY WISH LEONARDO WERE HERE TO JOIN IN THE FUN -- I'M CONCERNED ABOUT HIM, IT'S DARK OUT NOW... AND SNOWING...
DON'T WORRY, MASTER SPLINTER -- I'LL GET MIKE AND RAPH, AND WE'LL GO FIND HIM!

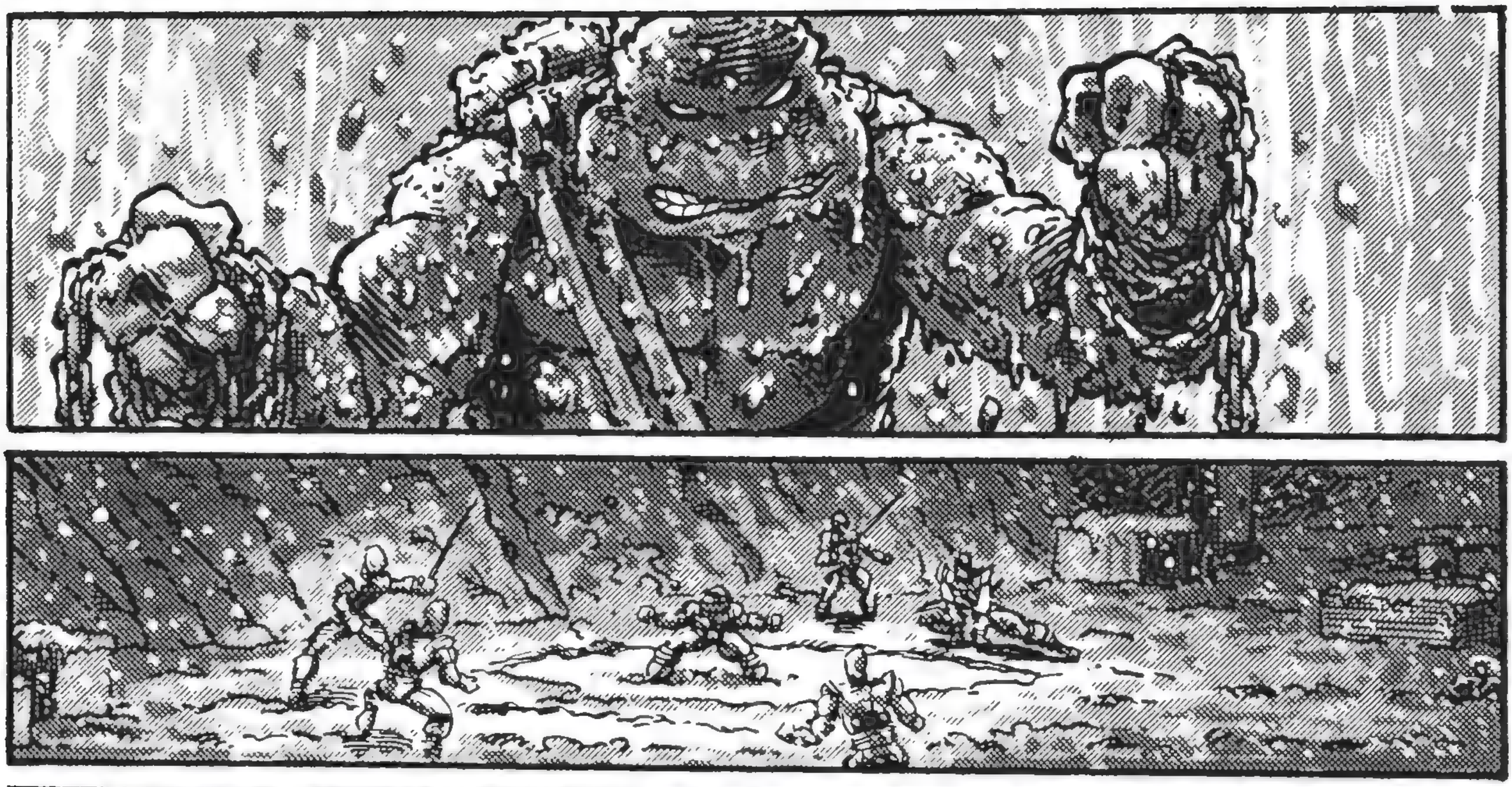


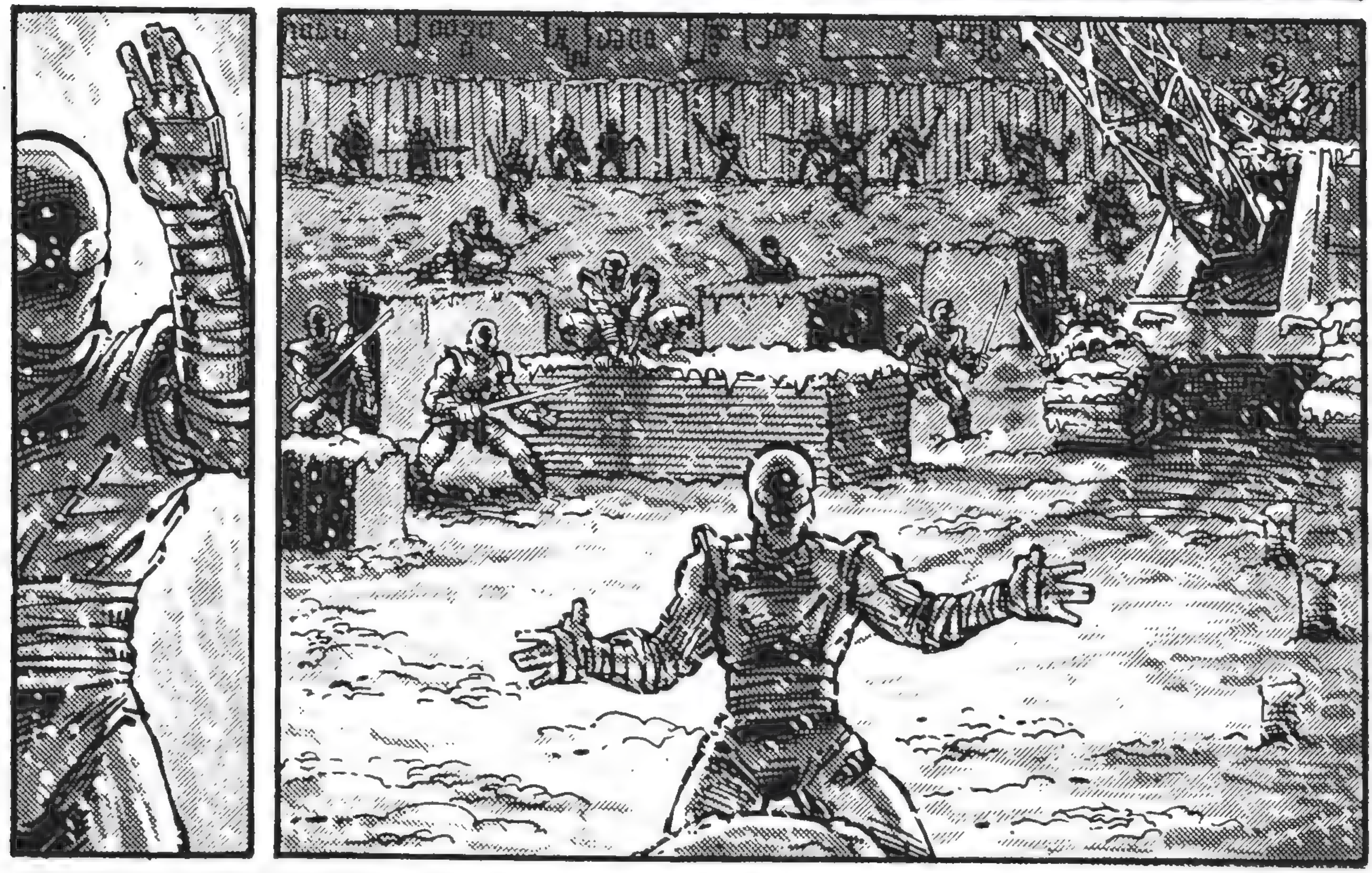


LIMM, LET'S SEE... SALAD'S MADE, BREAD'S RISING, TURKEY'S ALMOST DONE... WHAT'S NEXT?
MIKE, GRAB YOUR GEAR-- DINNER'S GOT TO WAIT!
KISS THE CHEF

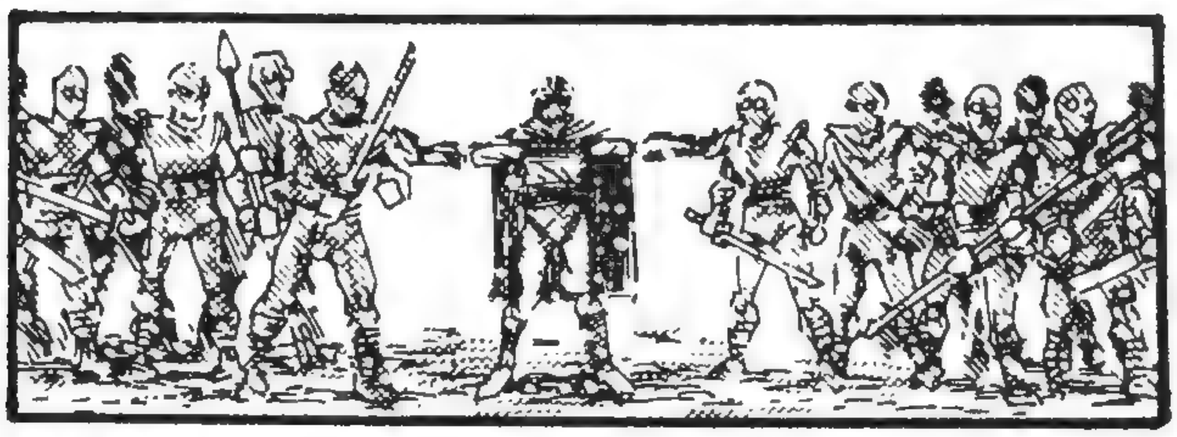


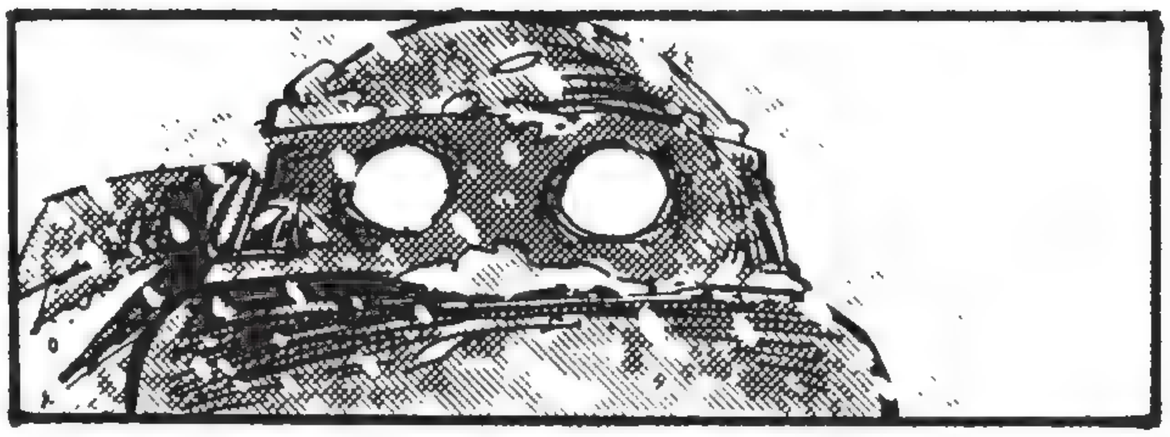

WOW! THE TREE LOOKS GREAT!-- AND IT'S GONNA LOOK EVEN BETTER WITH PRESENTS UNDER IT!
HEY-- I WAS JUST DOING MY "BILL THE CAT" IMPRESSION FOR KLUNK-- CHECK IT OUT!

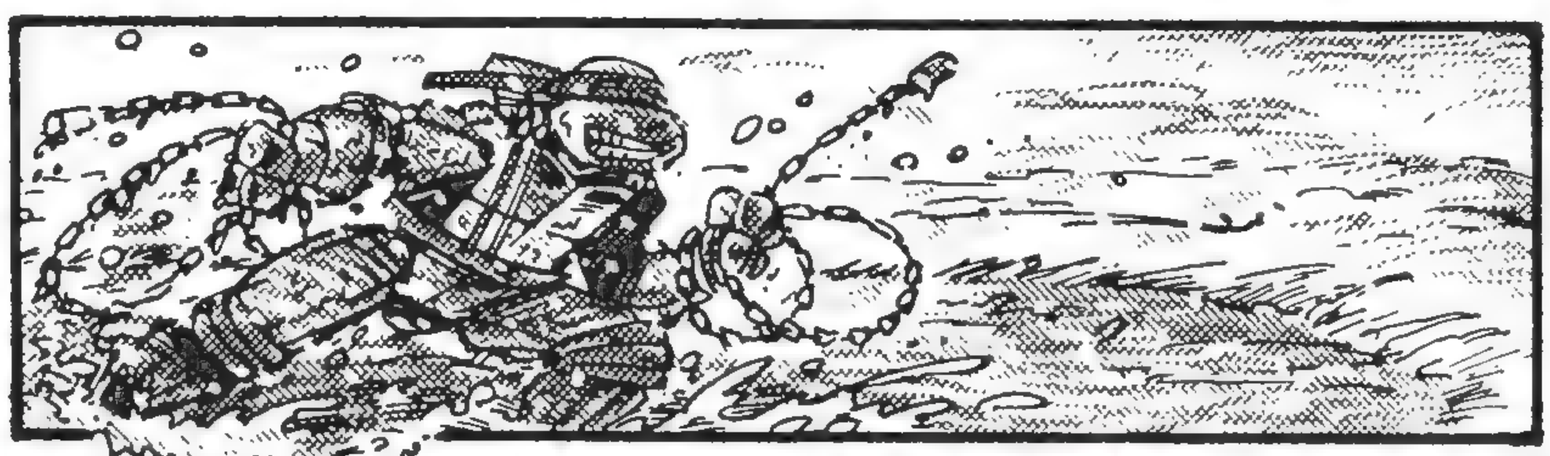


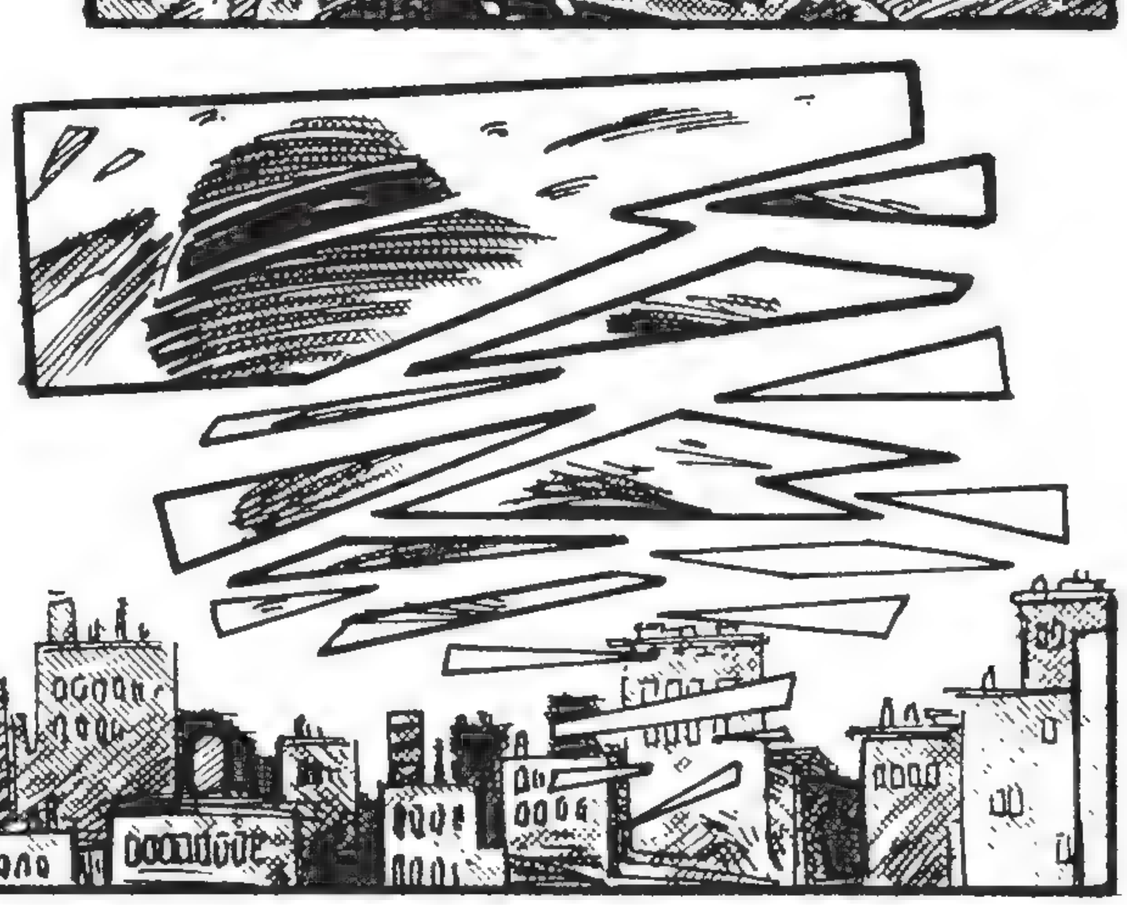


ACK! ACK! PFFFT!!!
VERY NICE, RAPH... BUT WE HAVE TO GO LOOK FOR LEO. C'MON, GEAR UP!

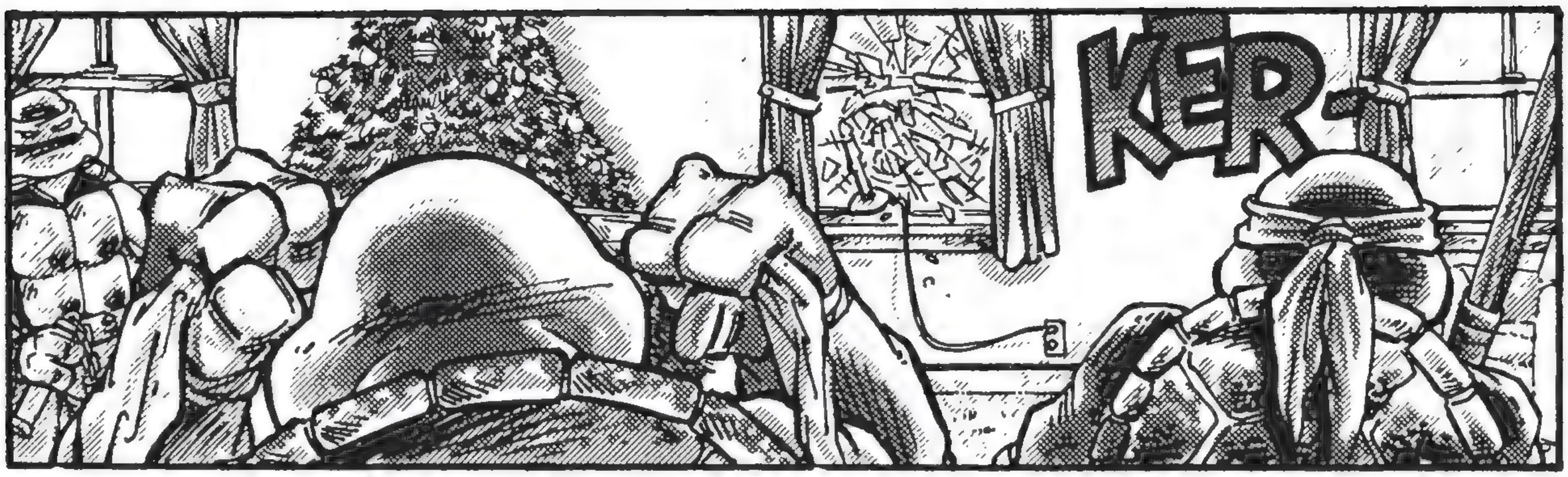




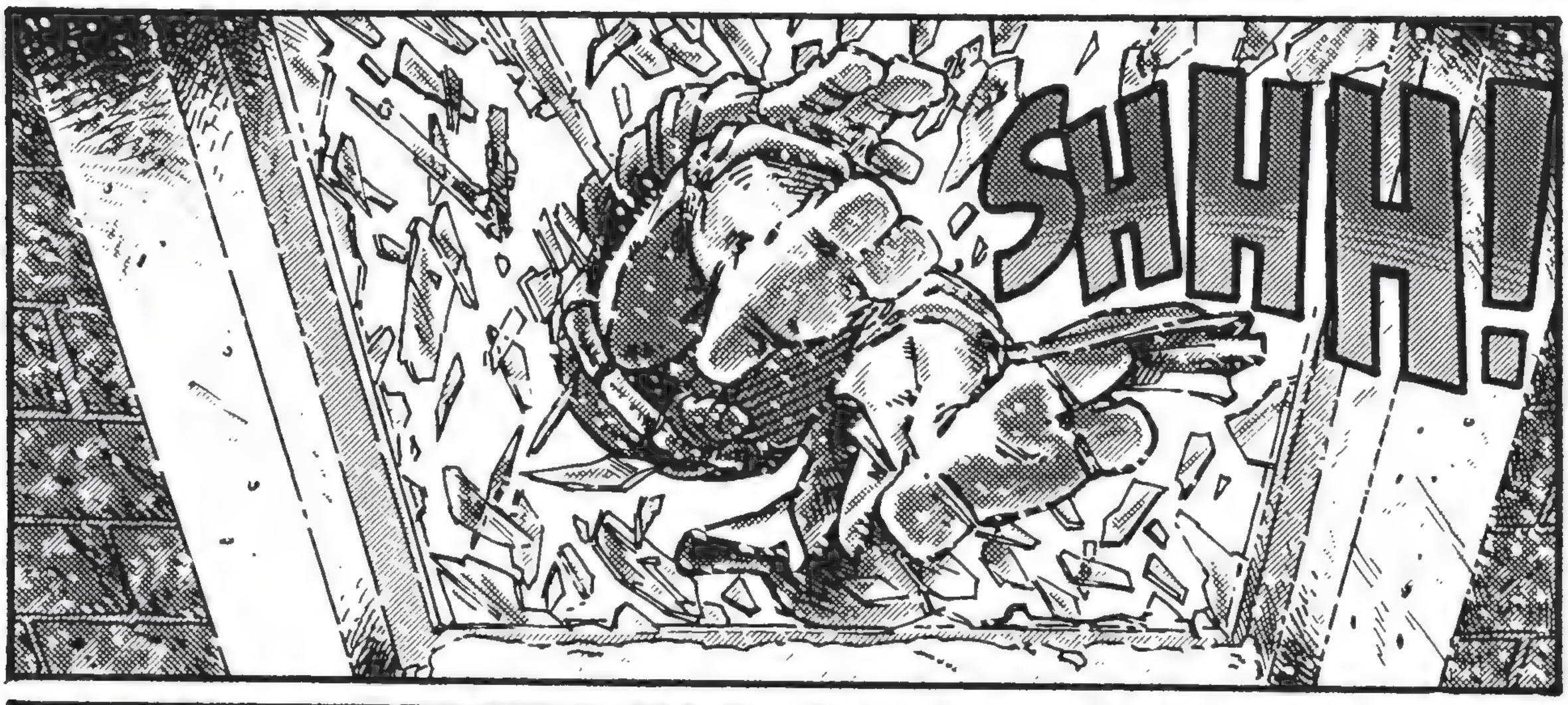


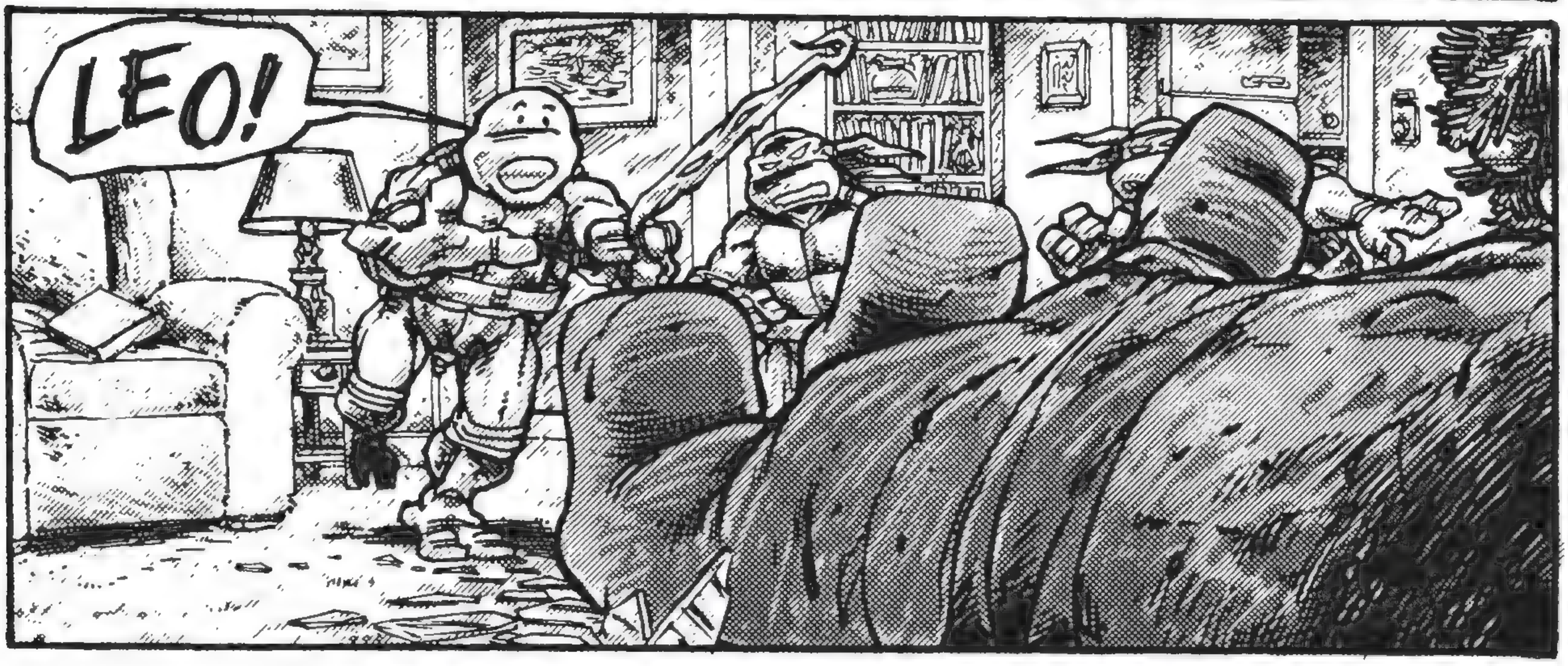


GEEZ, THIS IS STUPID--! LEO PROBABLY JUST GOT CARRIED AWAY WITH HIS EXERCISES--AND IS ON HIS WAY HERE RIGHT--


KER-

RASS!


SHHH!


LEO!

...HE'S... ...BACK...

...THE... ...SHREDDER...!!!

TO BE CONTINUED IN T.M.N.T # 10 !!!

ANNOTATIONS

KEVIN EASTMAN

I remember just a few years earlier when Pete and I were working up ideas for the second issue of TMNT, the one thing we agreed on was that we never wanted to be like all those OTHER superhero books that would bring back the same evil bad guy again and again and again. When we killed the Shredder at the end of book one, he would STAY dead.

A promise we kept for eleven issues. And then we got an idea... a really cool idea.

As we chugged through a pretty awesome 1986, comic sales were still climbing, we'd licensed a few TMNT projects, business was great, and we had been back in the Valley area of Western Massachusetts for over a year—we even had a little business office in the center of town. Life was VERY good. All of our focus was on making the next story cooler than the last one.

One thing that kept coming up in more than a few plotting sessions around this time was the idea that all the TMNT stories took place in New York City—a place that we'd only been to a few times, and we felt like we were faking it. We'd set them there because EVERY superhero lived in New York! Call it Metropolis, or Gotham City, we were doing stories there because we thought we HAD to, so people would relate to them better. But being the cocky guys that we were, we wondered what would happen if we brought them here—to Northampton, Mass. Would people still be interested?

So we decided to try. The first step would be getting them out of the city. But what, WHAT, would be powerful enough, evil enough, terrifying enough to force them out of their home? The Return of the Shredder. Bigger, badder, and really pissed off.

There were a number of other bigger things developing around this time, things that would lead to some very big changes by the following summer. But for now it was early fall, we had an awesome idea for a three-issue story arc, and a very cool way to start it.

PETER LAIRD

Although Kevin has gone on to do many other comics, including a number of TMNT comics after this issue, I think this represents a highpoint for his ability to lay out a story. I have looked at this issue many times, and I cannot find one flaw in his layouts. They're incredible!

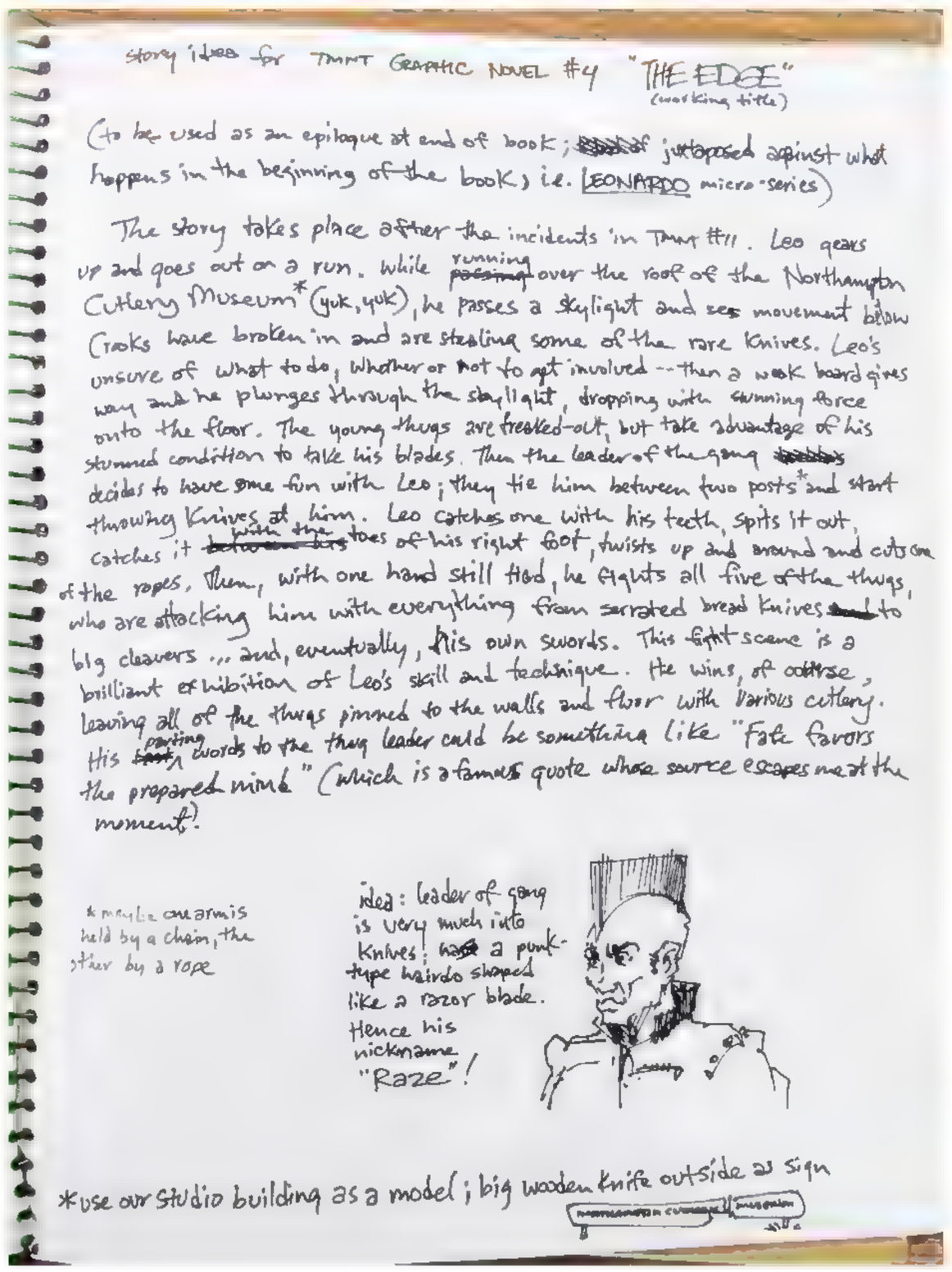
Getting the other guys involved with the inks and tones was, as I recall, a necessity to get the book done and to the printer on time to meet our publishing deadline… but it was also a lot of fun to "jam" on a book like that. And it was a learning experience—for example, I always thought we used the Graphix Duo-Shade board well, but seeing what Steve Bissette could do with it was eye opening. One example, which sticks out for me, is the panel at the top of page 179 in this collection. Leonardo has struggled to his feet after being knocked down a muddy, slushy slope by the Foot ninja, and stands there with chains wrapped around his forearms. Bissette's painterly approach to applying the Duo-Shade toning chemicals made that panel pop, really selling what was going on in it—Leo, exhausted, cold, and covered in slush and mud, but still desperately defiant.

I also had the honor and pleasure of doing the cover for this issue (a task Kevin and I would trade off—he'd do one, then I'd do the next, and so on). I've never been much of a painter, and looking at it now reminds me of how I aped something Kevin was doing with some of his paintings at the time—outlining key elements, typically figures in the foreground, with borders of flat colors. I could never do it as well as he could. But I like the way this one came out, especially the looming Shredder in the background.

Recently I found this among my memorabilia. And given that my memory of this thing is nonexistent, I was a bit perplexed by the first few lines:

"story idea for TMNT graphic novel #4 (To be used as an epilogue at end of book; juxtaposed against what happens in the beginning of the book, i.e. LEONARDO micro-series)"

I can't recall any other graphic novel projects proposed during that time, other than one which Kevin Eastman and I discussed at some length, featuring a story of the Turtles set something like twenty-five years in the future. But nothing came of that, either.



story idea for TMNT GRAPHIC NOVEL #4 "THE EDGE" (working title)

(to be used as an epilogue at end of book; ~~as~~ juxtaposed against what happens in the beginning of the book) i.e. LEONARDO micro-series)

The story takes place after the incidents in TMNT #11. Leo gears up and goes out on a run. While ~~pacing~~ running over the roof of the Northampton Cutlery Museum* (yuk, yuk), he passes a skylight and sees movement below. Crooks have broken in and are stealing some of the rare knives. Leo's unsure of what to do, whether or not to get involved -- then a weak board gives way and he plunges through the skylight, dropping with stunning force onto the floor. The young thugs are freaked-out, but take advantage of his stunned condition to take his blades. Then the leader of the gang ~~decides~~ decides to have some fun with Leo; they tie him between two posts* and start throwing knives at him. Leo catches one with his teeth, spits it out, catches it ~~with the~~ between the toes of his right foot, twists up and around and cuts one of the ropes. Then, with one hand still tied, he fights all five of the thugs, who are attacking him with everything from serrated bread knives ~~and~~ to big cleavers ... and, eventually, his own swords. This fight scene is a brilliant exhibition of Leo's skill and technique. He wins, of course, leaving all of the thugs pinned to the walls and floor with various cutlery. His ~~last~~ parting words to the thug leader could be something like "Fate favors the prepared mind." (which is a famous quote whose source escapes me at the moment).

* maybe one arm is held by a chain, the other by a rope

idea: leader of gang is very much into knives; ~~has~~ a punk-type hairdo shaped like a razor blade. Hence his nickname "Raze"!

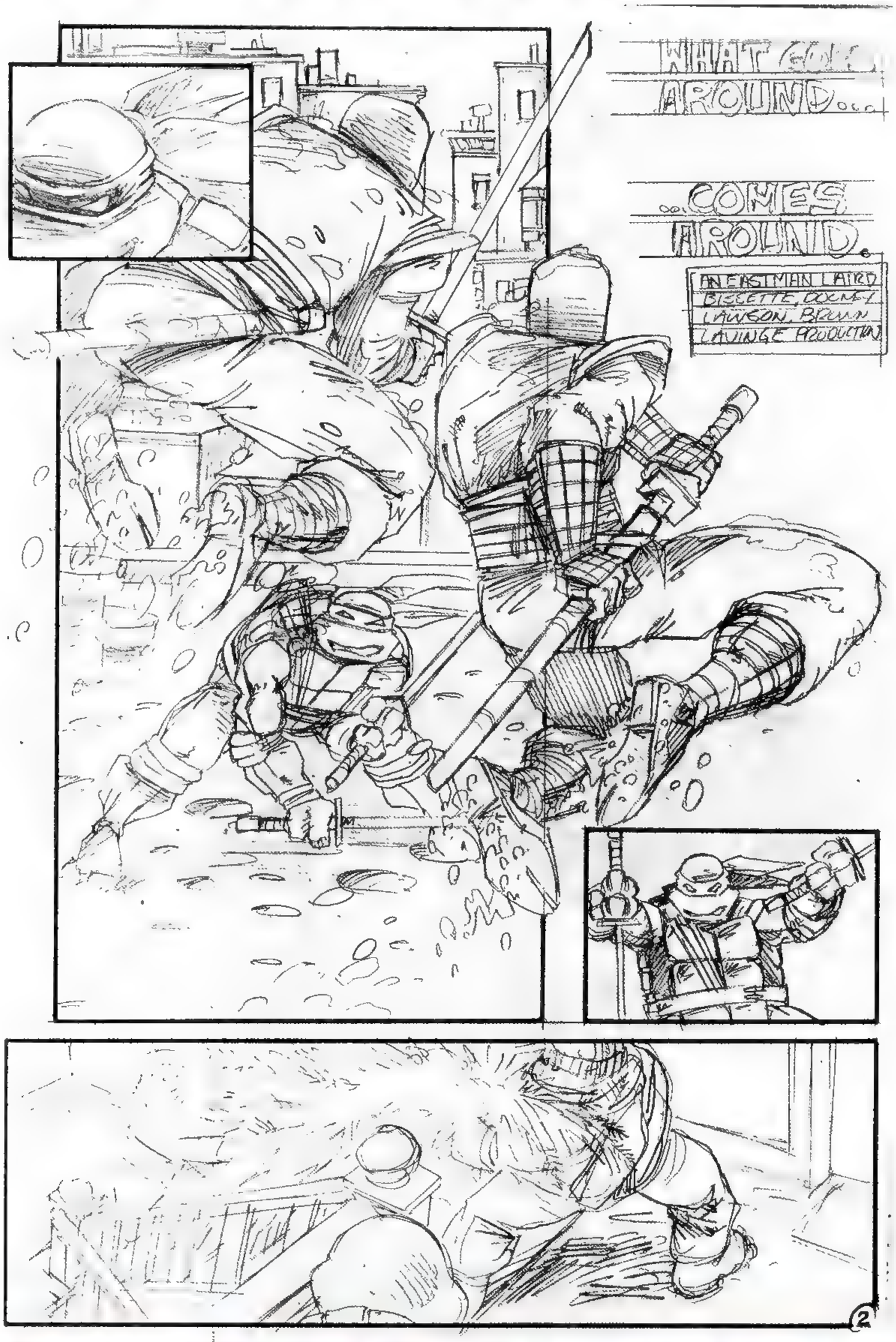
*use our studio building as a model; big wooden knife outside as sign

ANNOTATIONS

Page 1: I had laid out and penciled a story called "Road Trip" that artist Ryan Brown inked, and the story had no words in it but the title. I wanted to try that again. So Pete and I came up with this idea to split the Leonardo one-shot into two parts, two stories happening at the same time—in two different locations—and we'd tie them in at the end.

I would lay out the part that would take up three quarters of the page, the part where Leo is fighting for his life, and Pete would lay out the part where the rest of the guys, Mike, Don, and Raph, with Splinter and April, were getting ready to celebrate Christmas Eve.

We beat out the script to a point where we would try to capture an ironic moment or two, the pleasant, warm, and cozy apartment juxtaposed against Leo's plight—and in my opinion, it worked great from the very first page.



Page 2: What's interesting here—beside the fact that we had the incredible Jim Lawson inking Peter's layout section, plus Steve Bissette, Mike Dooney and Ryan Brown helping with backgrounds and Duoshade tones—was that the titles were back to stay.

We had started with "Me, Myself, and I" as the title for the Raphael one-shot and besides short stories, they didn't return until Michaelangelo's "The Christmas Aliens," and then Donatello's "Kirby and the Warp Crystal." The "Pre-Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle" story in issue #9 was called "The Passing" but from this point on, they all had titles.

Page 4: I think I was showing off a little bit with my layouts for this issue. I had racked up over four hundred pages of them by now, and was getting the feel of how I could bring the audience along for a specific kind of ride, instead of just trying to get the right panel in the right places to tell a clear story.

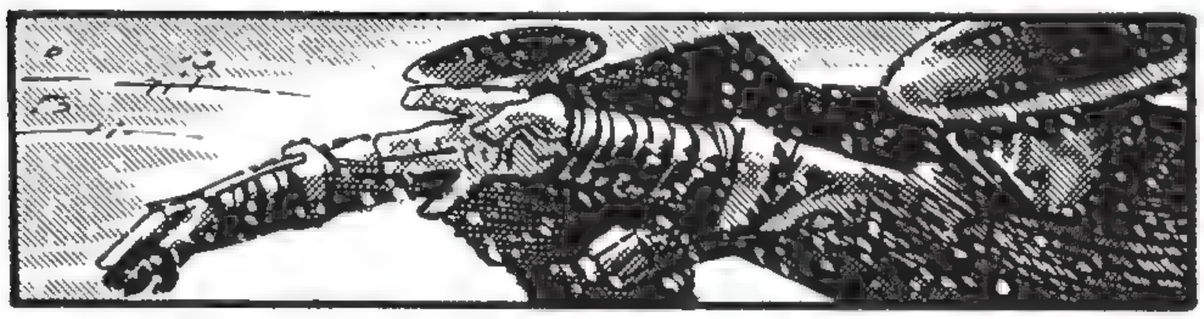
I wanted fans to have to *want to* look at every panel, faster and faster and faster as the pace and intensity picked up, so the punch line twenty-eight pages later kicked them square in the chest. This was the fun stuff.

Pages 8–11: These pages really show the comfort level and teamwork we had going on then; Pete and I sharing the same brain if you will. I was using every trick from every "Lone Wolf and Cub" movie I had seen in my series of panels, and he was knocking them out of the park with his one panel—relating to mine perfectly.

ANNOTATIONS

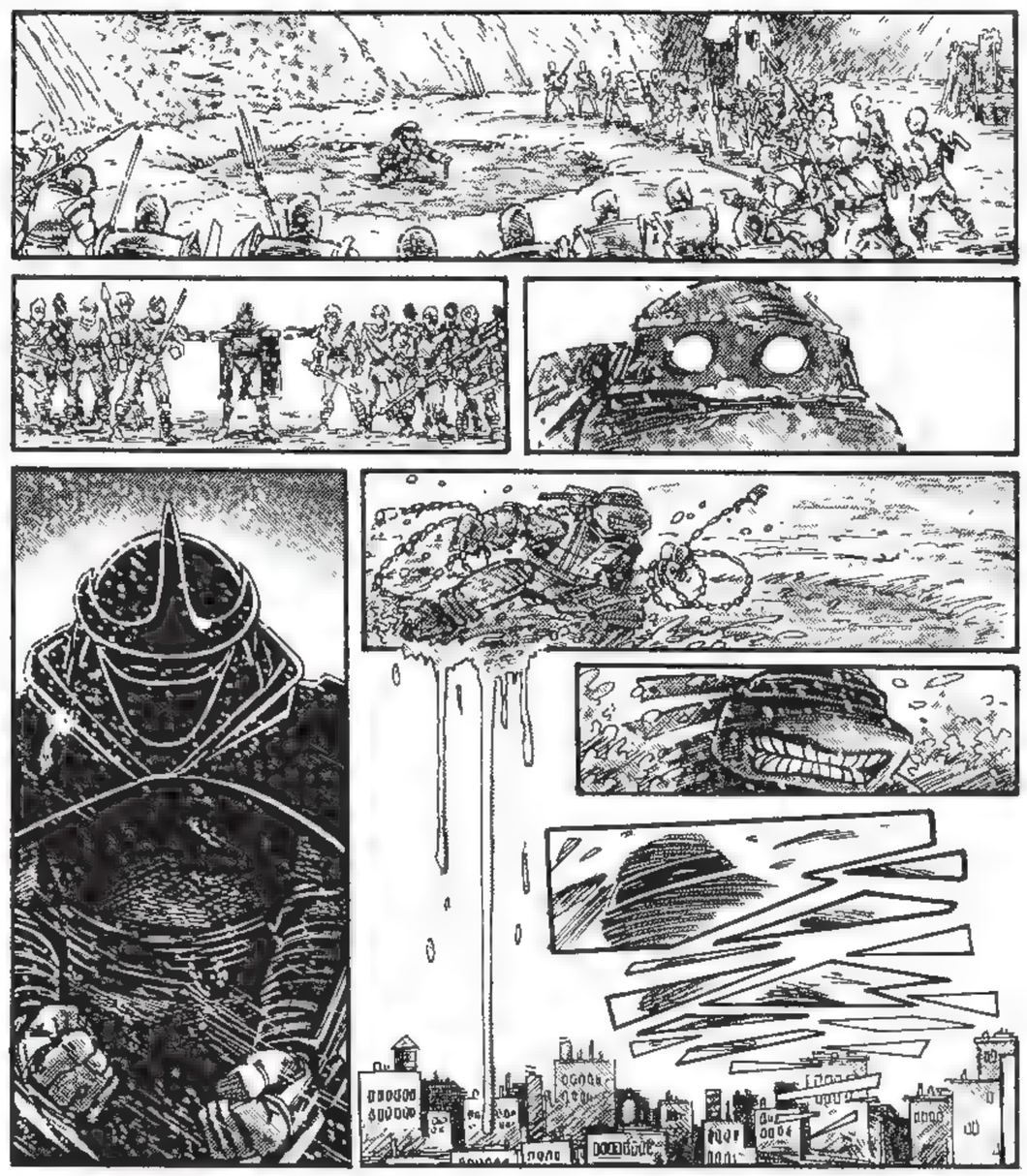
Page 14: In many ways, I almost think my part was easier—all I really needed to do was keep building the action up, pushing Leonardo harder with each page turned, and the story really told itself at the same time.

Since we hadn't really used the Foot Clan ninjas since issue #1, we had the chance to re-invent them, and build their ranks up. There would be grunts, lots of grunts, but there would also be corporals, captains, and even Special Forces.

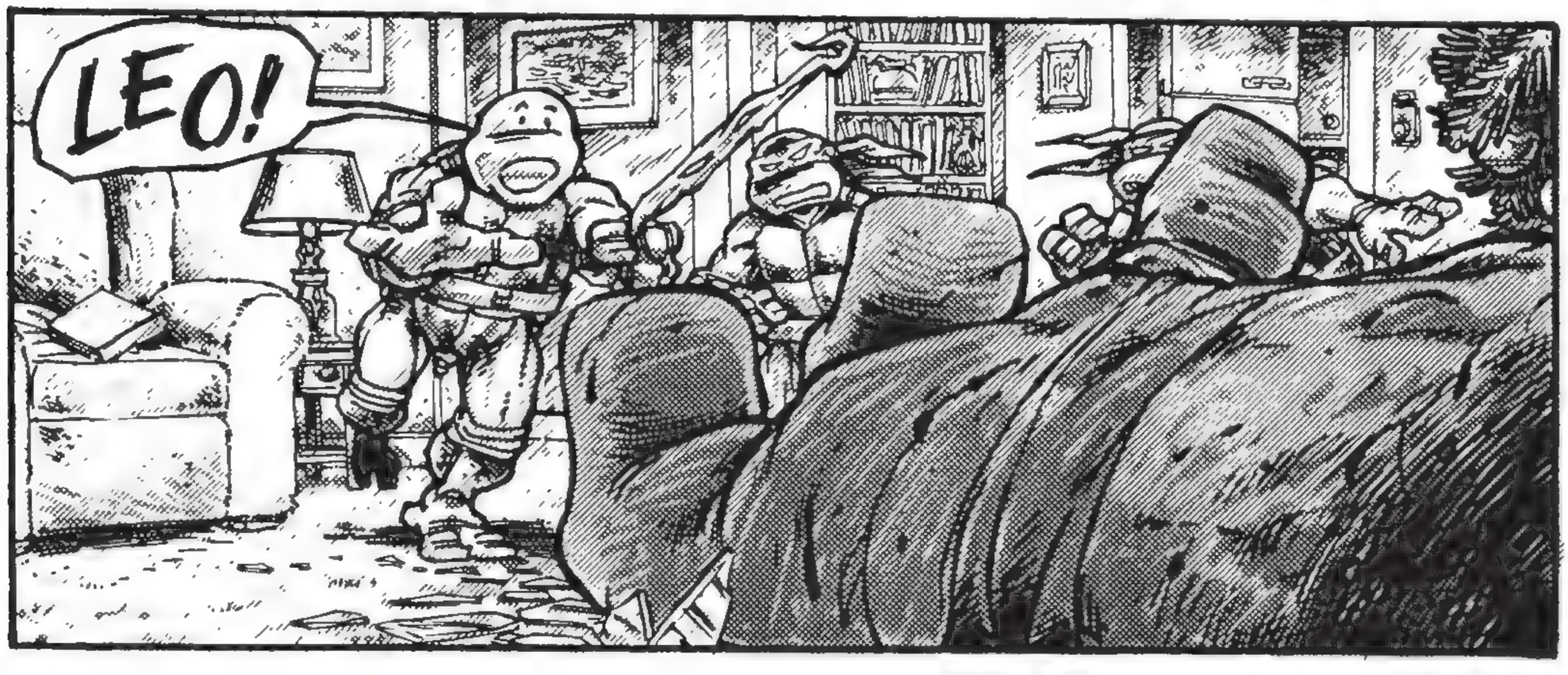


Page 19: The Shredder Elite. This was the first time we used these guys with the flat headwear, and you wouldn't see them again, besides a brief appearance in issue #21, until issue #50.

Page 24: What was awesome about this issue, like all the other "One in a One-issue Micro-Series" issues, was that it fully captured a specific side of each Turtle. And in nearly each case, dug deeper into that Turtle's exact personality. Leo was always designed as the leader, right down to the choice of weapons, and here was the place we'd show the fans why.



Pages 28–29: And this is where we brought both stories together—it still gives me goose bumps. Looking back, I think the piece really worked as a single story (what an intense cliffhanger for the start of the arc!) but would also become a scene re-created in the first live-action movie… using a different Turtle. But still, pretty awesome.



EASTMAN AND LAIRD'S TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES™

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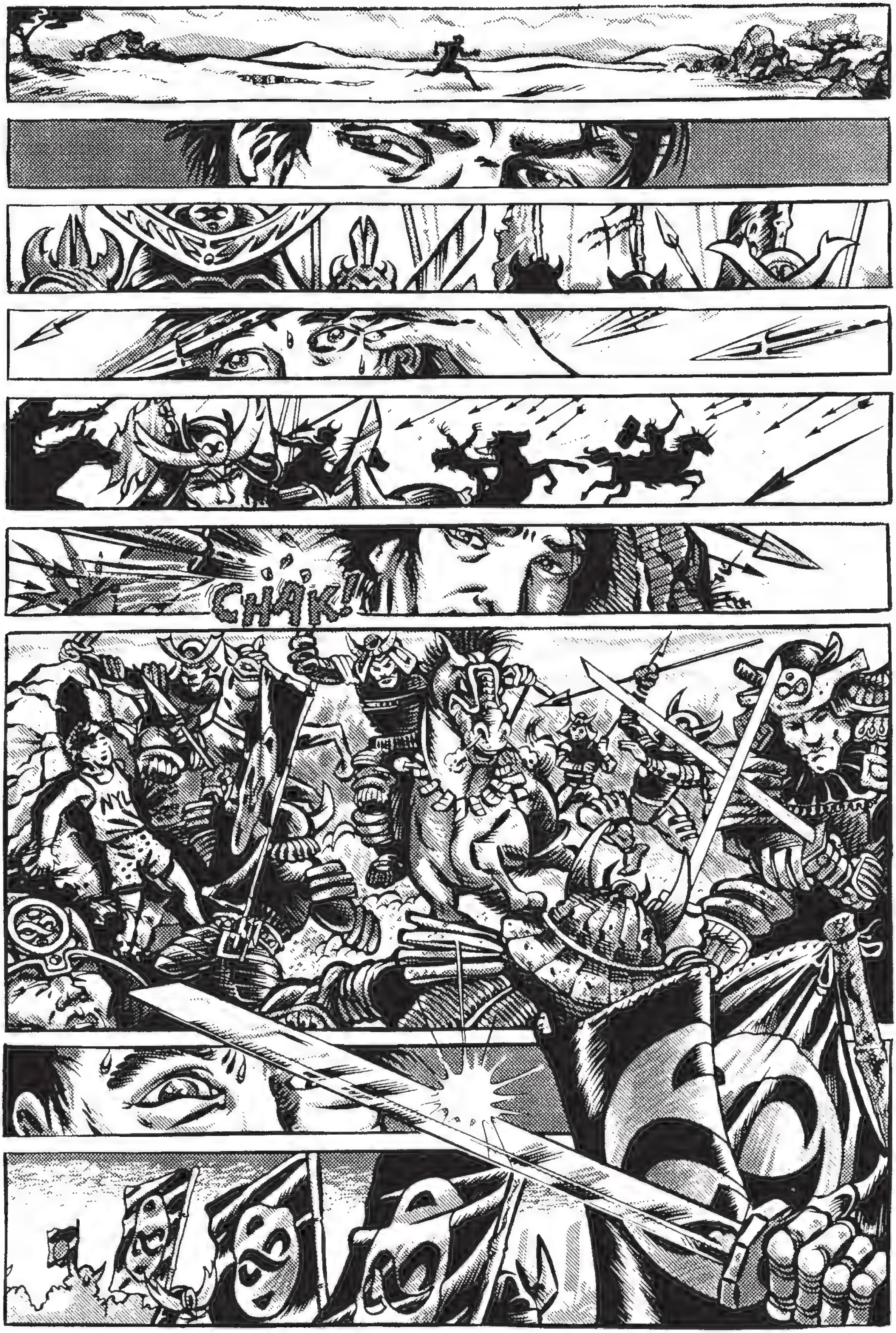

СНЯЙК!

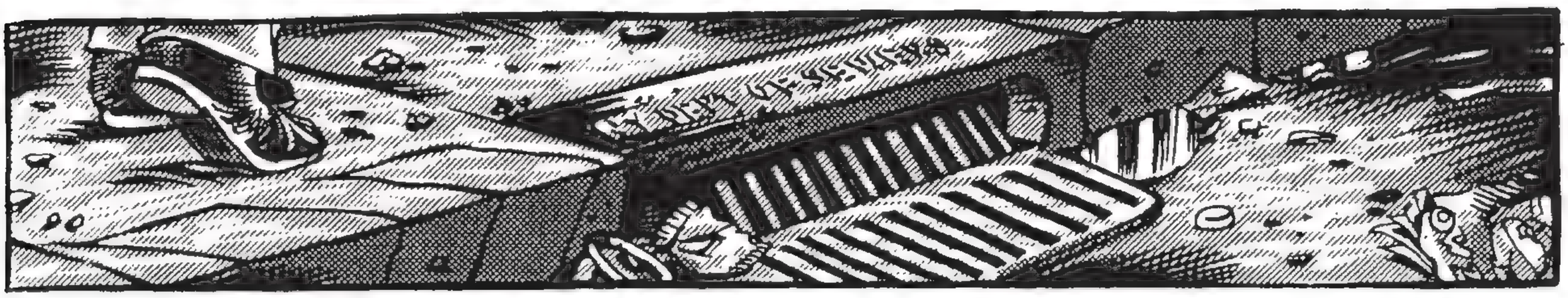
AAAAAAHH!

OOOHHHH...

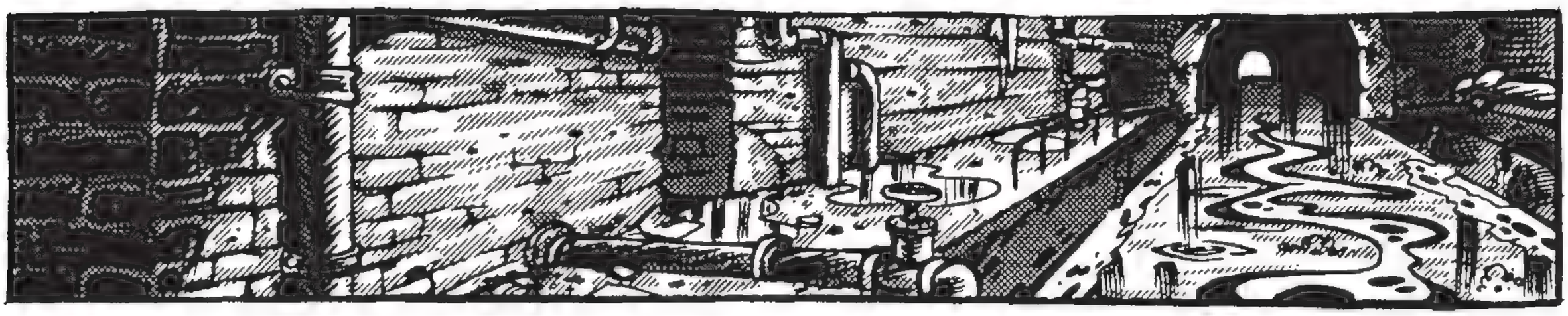
THAT SAME DREAM AGAIN... THAT SYMBOL...!

...WHAT COULD IT MEAN...?

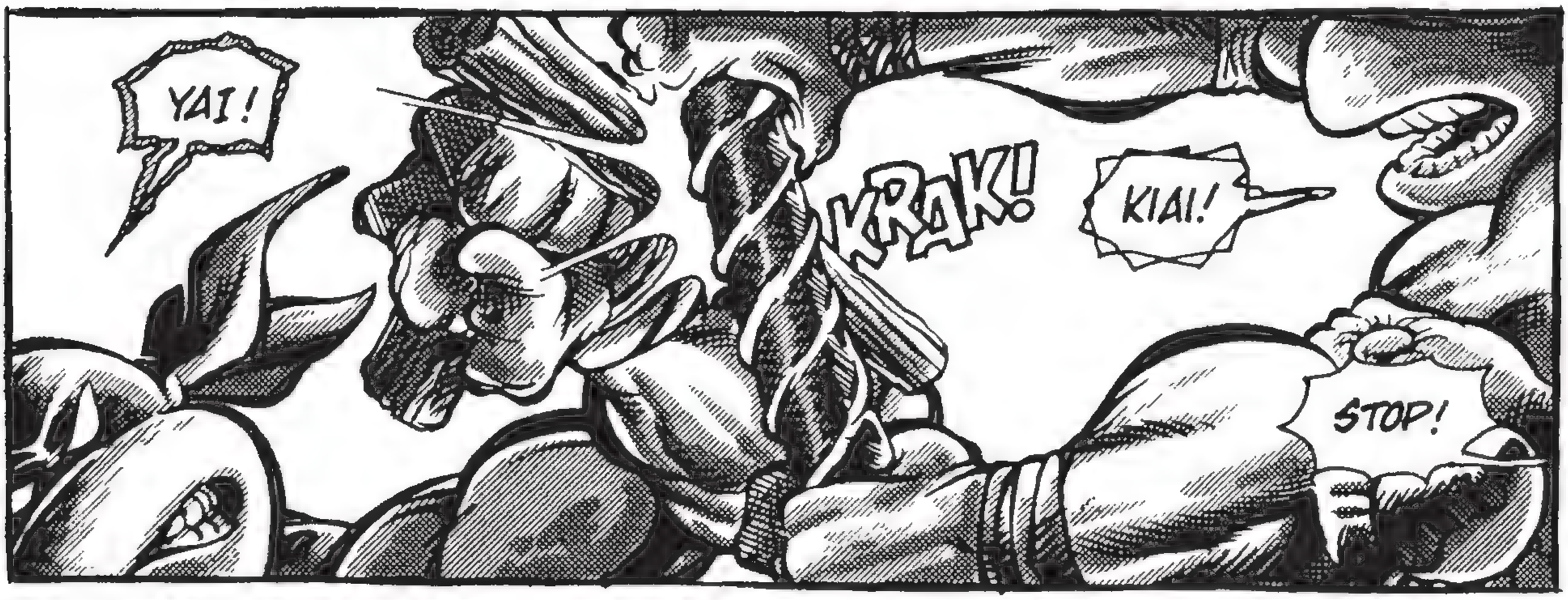
EASTMAN and LAIRD'S



PRE-TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA



TURTLES



THE PASSING

STORY BY EASTMAN and LAIRD - PENCILS BY MICHAEL DOONEY
INKS'n'TONES BY EASTMAN. LAIRD, DOONEY, RYAN BROWN and JIM LAWSON - LETTERS by LAVIGNE

GOOD AGGRESSIVE TECHNIQUE, RAPHAEL... DONATELLO, YOU NEED TO GET MORE EXTENSION IN YOUR BLOCKING THRUSTS...

...LIKE THIS! SEE?

YES, MASTER SPLINTER...

KRAK!

MICHAELANGELO! STOP FOOLING AROUND! THE **MANRIKI-GUSARI** IS NOT A WEAPON TO BE TRIFLED WITH!

BAP!

OW!

WHOOSH!

BUT I HATE THIS STUPID THING! CAN'T I PRACTICE WITH THE CHUCKS?

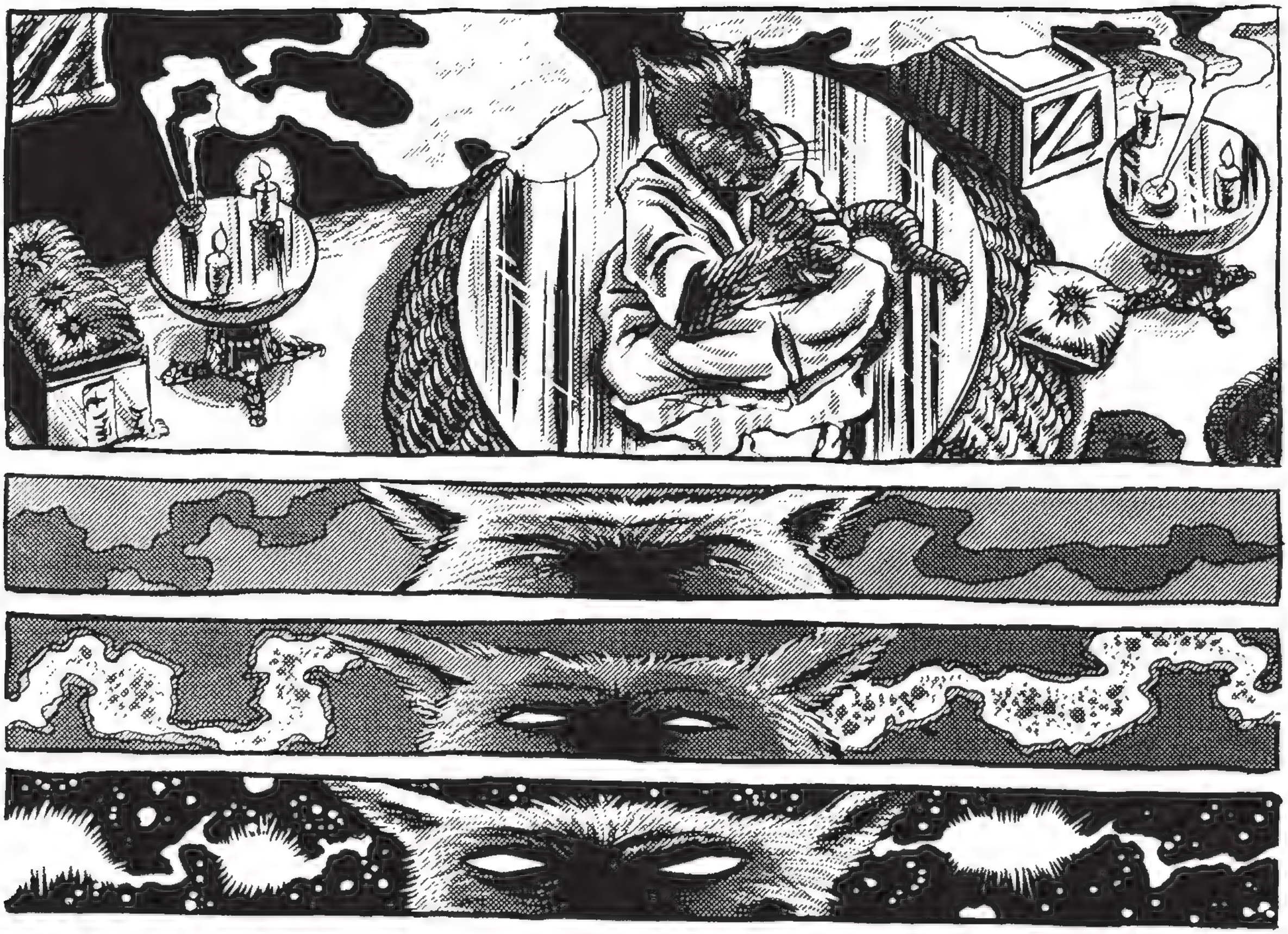
LEONARDO, YOUR FORM, AS ALWAYS, IS IMPECCABLE. BUT PRACTICING **KATAS** IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR COMBAT. TOMORROW, I WANT YOU TO SPAR WITH RAPHAEL.

YES, MASTER SPLINTER...

BAK!

ENOUGH LESSONS FOR TODAY, MY SONS. I AM GOING TO MEDITATE...

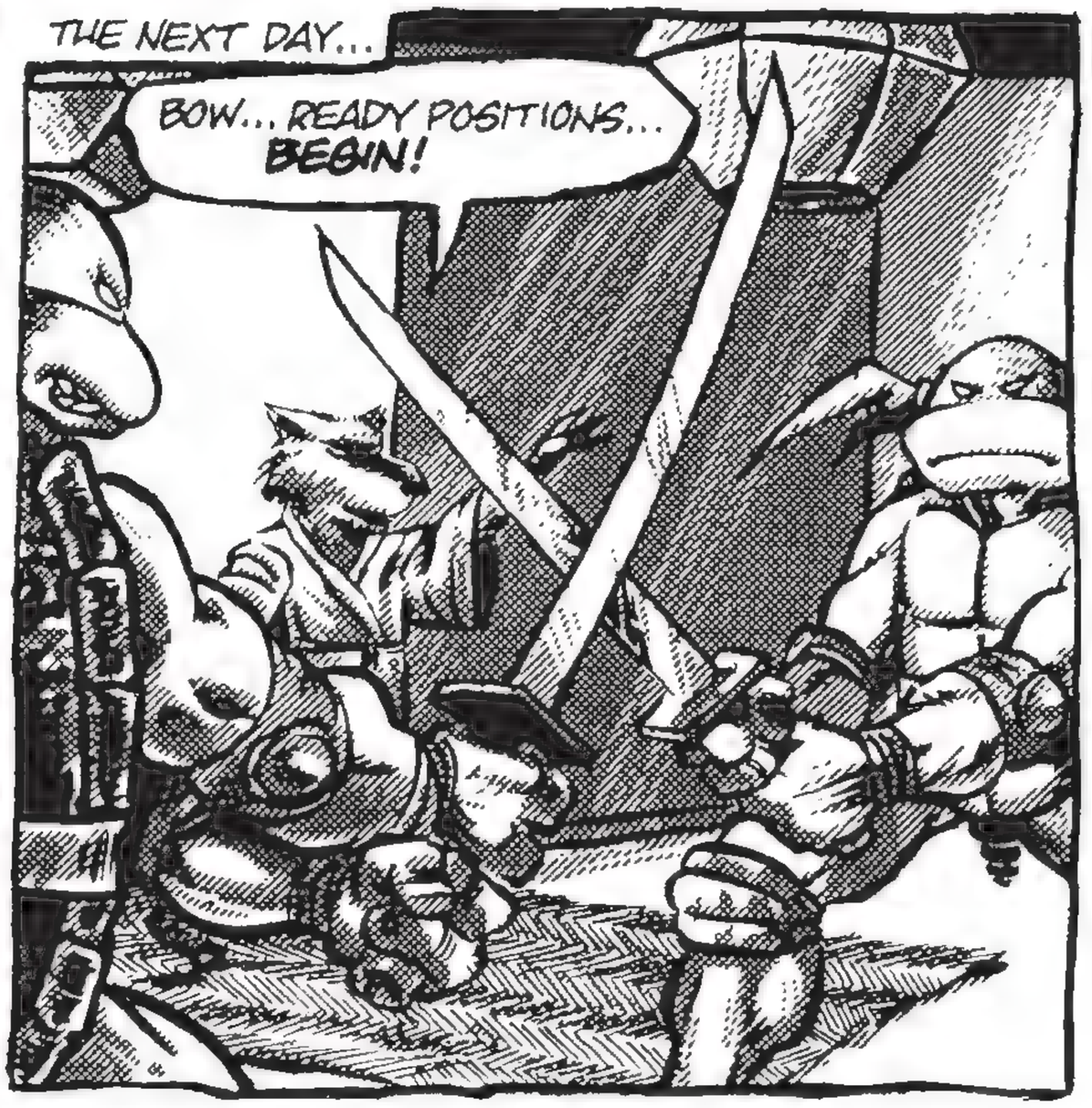
...BUT TOMORROW WE START AGAIN AT THE SAME TIME!



WHAT...?!

WHAT... WAS THAT? A PRESENCE... ON THE ASTRAL PLANE. A BRIEF TOUCH... SEARCHING...
...THEN IT WAS GONE!

HMMM...


THE NEXT DAY...
BOW... READY POSITIONS... BEGIN!

HMM... CAN'T GET THAT NEAR CONTACT OUT OF MY MIND... WHO COULD IT BE...?

ANOTHER MIND... **POWERFUL... DISCIPLINED...** AND SOMEHOW **DESPERATE!** I MUST TRY TO REACH IT...

ENOUGH! LESSONS ARE OVER FOR TODAY...

...AND YOU HAVE THE REST OF THE DAY TO DO WITH WHAT YOU WILL... JUST TRY TO BE QUIET.

YAHOO! A DAY OFF!

GREAT... I CAN CATCH UP ON MY READING!

REAL QUIET, **MIKE!**

LATER...

...NOTHING YET... MUST KEEP TRYING...

...MUST KEEP PUSHING.. SEND MY THOUGHTS... KEEP MY MIND RECEPTIVE...

...STILL NOTHING... WAS IT ALL JUST A **HALLUCINATION?** ... JUST A ...

...A...AAH...!

AT LAST..!

INCREDIBLE! I--I CAN EVEN SEE YOU... SORT OF... AND... NOW... I KNOW YOUR NAME... **GOSEI HATSUMI!**

... AND YOU, SPLINTER... I AM VERY GLAD TO... HAVE FOUND YOU...

...FROM MY DEATH BED... HERE IN OUR HOMELAND, JAPAN... I HAVE SENT MY MIND SEARCHING... SEARCHING... FOR THE ONE WHO COULD HELP ME...

... HELP MY FAMILY... TO SURVIVE... TO CONTINUE THE GOSEI LINE... IN **HONOR** AND IN **STRENGTH**...

WHAT... CAN I DO?

HELP ME... TO PASS ON THE SPIRIT-FORCE OF THE GOSEI SAMURAI CLAN... THROUGH THE AGES, PASSED ON FROM FATHER TO SON... NOW IT IS MY TURN ...BUT MY SON IS LOST TO ME...

IS HE... DEAD?

HE LIVES, IN YOUR CITY OF NEW YORK... BUT HIS SPIRT IS DEAD... MY ONLY CHANCE... TO PASS ON THE FORCE... IS TO HIS SON... MY ONLY **GRANDCHILD**... AND HE STAND ON THE **KNIFE'S EDGE**...

HE IS AT THE CRITICAL POINT... OF DECISION... TO FOLLOW HIS FATHER'S PATH OF **EVIL**... OR TO TAKE UP THE **GOSEI SAMURAI** WAY OF HONOR... AND CONTINUE THE GOSEI TRADITION... IF HE DOES NOT... OUR FAMILY LINE MAY NOT DIE OUT... BUT THE GOSEI BUSHIDO SPIRIT WILL BE DUST...

HOW CAN I HELP YOU...?

FOR A SHORT TIME... I MUST BE YOU!... THE RITUAL OF PASSAGE... REQUIRES PHYSICAL CONTACT... AND I AM TOO OLD AND FRAIL...

...TO LEAVE THIS BED... WE MUST EXCHANGE BODIES... IT IS DANGEROUS... THIS OLD BODY HAS NO MORE THAN **TEN HOURS** LEFT... IF IT EXPIRES WHILE YOU RESIDE IN IT... YOU WILL **DIE**, TOO... IT IS A THING BEYOND MEASURING... THAT I ASK YOU TO DO...

WE HAVE LITTLE TIME TO WASTE...

SO... LET IT--

-- BE DONE!

HMM... HOW STRANGE THIS FEELS... THIS BODY IS LIKE... A **DRY LEAF**... ABOUT TO BE LIFTED ON... A DIVINE WIND...

AND YOURS... SO DIFFERENT FROM BEING HUMAN! I FEEL YOUR STRENGTH... I SENSE YOUR MEMORIES, AS YOU MUST SENSE MINE... AND I KNOW YOUR STUDENTS...

LEONARDO! RAPHAEL! DONATELLO! MICHAELANGELO!

GATHER YOUR WEAPONS-- WE HAVE A MISSION!

LATER...

MASTER SPLINTER. WE'VE BEEN CROSSING ROOF TOPS FOR NEARLY HALF AN HOUR... AND YOU STILL HAVEN'T SAID WHERE WE'RE GOING!

YEAH... WHAT'S THIS "MISSION"?!

Road GIZMO

WE ARE TRYING TO SAVE A LIFE... AND SALVAGE A HERITAGE!

ASK ME NO MORE... NOW I MUST SEARCH... FOR OUR DESTINATION...

STAND BACK--! AND BE QUITE!

I MUST CONCENTRATE...

AAH... YES... I HAVE IT.

LET'S GO!

SHORTLY...

THERE!

WOW!

WE MUST REACH THE GARDEN... ON THE TOP FLOOR.

THE BUILDING LOOMS BEFORE THEM LIKE A HIGH-TECH PARODY OF TRADITONAL JAPANESE ARCHITECTURE... A DAUNTING OBSTACLE...

...BUT NOT TO THE STUDENTS OF SPLINTER!

HOW FAR DO WE HAVE TO CRAWL THROUGH THESE AIR DUCTS, MASTER SPLINTER?

NOT MUCH FURTHER LEONARDO...

YES! THERE... SLIDE PAST ME, LEONARDO, AND OPEN THAT GRATE UP AHEAD!

LOOKS LIKE WE'VE FOUND THAT GARDEN, MASTER SPLINTER...!

QUIET NOW, YOU GUYS!

WHO ARE THOSE GUYS?

OUR MISSION...!

LISTEN...

...MAKES ME A PROUD MAN TO HAVE A SON LIKE YOU--STRONG AND ABLE--READY TO TAKE CHARGE OF MY BUSINESS WHEN I RETIRE!

FATHER... I--I'VE BEEN THINKING...ABOUT AFTER I GRADUATE THIS YEAR... GOING FOR MY MASTER'S DEGREE...

YOU WON'T HAVE TIME FOR THAT, HATTORI--YOU'LL BE TOO BUSY WITH IMPORTANT THINGS...

HE'S DOING IT AGAIN... NOT LISTENING TO ME! WHY CAN'T I JUST TELL HIM THAT I WANT TO LIVE MY OWN LIFE--THAT I WANT NOTING TO DO WITH HIS DAMN CRIME EMPIRE...! BUT I CAN'T DISHONOR HIM... HE IS MY FATHER...

...RUNNING GOSEICO, INC. IS VERY MUCH A FULL-TIME JOB--BUT I HAVE FAITH THAT I'VE RAISED A SON WHO CAN HANDLE IT!

I NEED TO FIND A WAY TO TALK WITH THE YOUNG ONE... **ALONE!**

RAPHAEL, DONATELLO-- SCOUT AROUND... SEE IF THERE ARE ANY GUARDS... AND CHECK FOR OTHER EXITS!

MINUTES LATER...

NOBODY'S AROUND... NO GUARDS! STRANGE, THOUGH...

YEAH-- YOU'D THINK RICH GUYS WOULD HAVE ALL KINDS OF--

SHH! HOLD IT! VOICES... UP AHEAD...

IT'S ALL SET, THEN...?

YES... OUR MEN ARE IN PLACE...

... THE QUINTET OF ASSASSINS WILL SOLVE OUR LITTLE "PROBLEM"...

HEH... THIS WILL BE KENJI AND HATTORI'S LAST LUNCH TOGETHER...

THEY'RE KEEPING THEIR VOICES LOW... HARD TO HEAR CLEARLY...

WHEN THE COOK SERVES THE FOOD AND LEAVES... THAT WILL BE THE SIGNAL FOR THE ATTACK...

...WITH BOTH GOSEI'S DEAD. CONTROL OF THE SYNDICATE-- AND ALL THOSE MILLIONS IN DOPE AND GAMBLING PROFITS, AMONG OTHER THING-- WILL BE IN OUR HANDS! **HEH, HEH...**

YOU KNOW, IN A WAY I ALMOST FEEL SORRY FOR **KENJI** AND **HATTORI**...

...ALMOST, BUT NOT QUITE! **HA HA HA!**

C'MON, RAPH-- WE'VE GOT TO TELL SPLINTER, QUICK!

HEH, HEH, HEH...!

MASTER SPLINTER!

RAPHAEL AND I OVERHEARD SOME GUYS-- THEY'RE PLOTTING TO KILL THE TWO GUYS YOU WERE LOOKING FOR!

WHAT IS THEIR PLAN?!

I THINK THEY HAVE FOUR ASSASSINS MOVING IN TO STRIKE WHEN DINNER STARTS...

YOU "THINK"...?!

THEY WERE TALKING IN VERY LOW VOICES, MASTER-- IT SOUNDED LIKE "QUARTET"...

DONATELLO, RAPHAEL, MICHAELANGELO-- FIND THESE FOUR ASSASSINS AND STOP THEM!

ALL RIGHT-- SOME ACTION!

LEONARDO WILL STAY WITH ME AS A RESERVE...

BE QUICK, MY NINJA-- FOR TIME IS SHORT... AND...

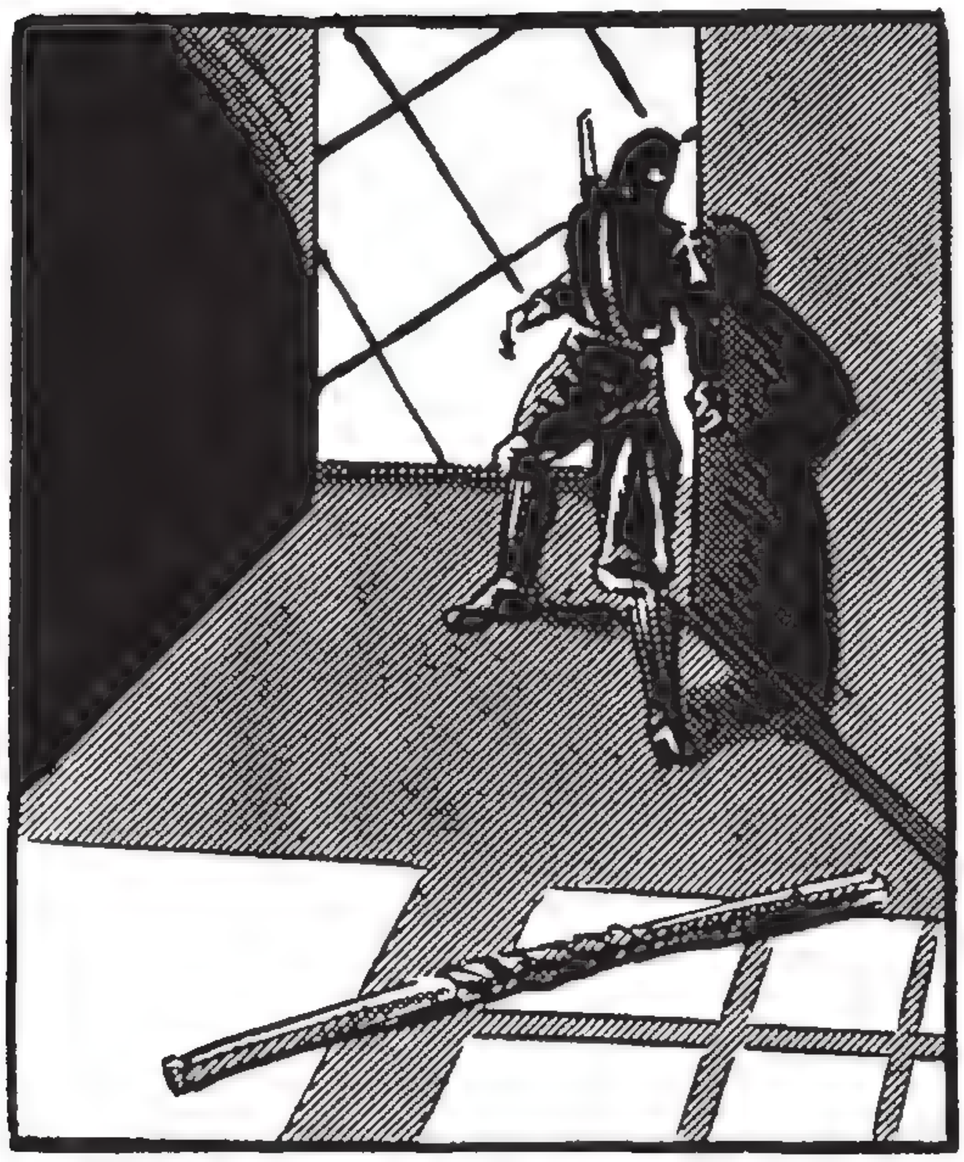
...DINNER IS SERVED, SIR.

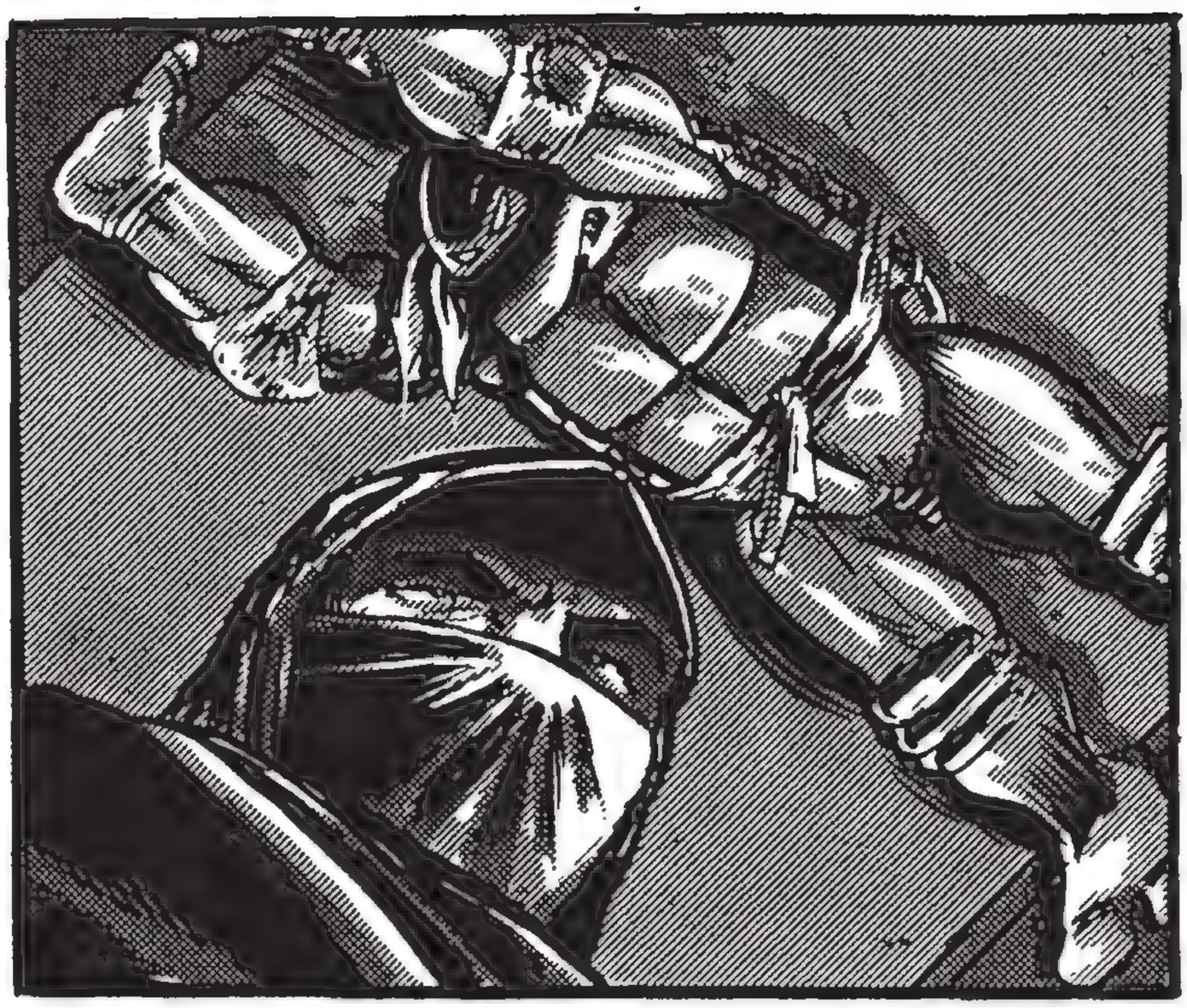
UHHH... FEELING WEAKER... DON'T HAVE MUCH ENERGY LEFT...

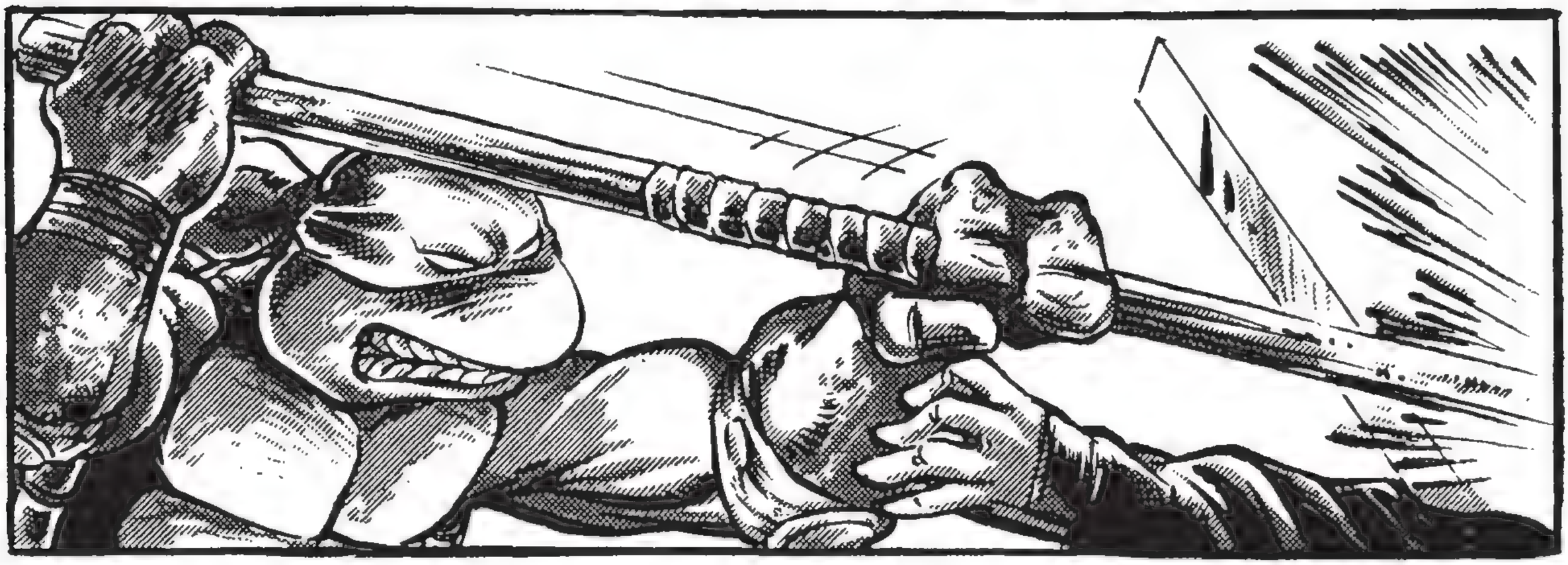
I FEAR... THAT I WILL FAIL...

NO...! YOU... CAN SUCCEED, HATSUMI... BUT...

...YOU MUST... ACT SOON!







CHA-CHAK

PSSSST!!!

WHA...

THUK.

TWO DOWN...

...AND MINE MAKES **THREE!**

SO THAT LEAVES ONE OF THESE GOONS ON THE LOOSE...

...LET'S BOOGIE BACK TO THE GARDEN-- LEO AND SPLINTER MIGHT NEED US IF THE **FOURTH CREEP** IS THERE!

...WON'T BE EASY TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION TO MY GRANDSON... IMPOSSIBLE WHILE HIS FATHER IS IN THE ROOM!

HOW CAN I GET HATTORI ALONE...?

WHAT'S WRONG, HATTORI? YOU'RE NOT EATTING... ARE YOU ILL?

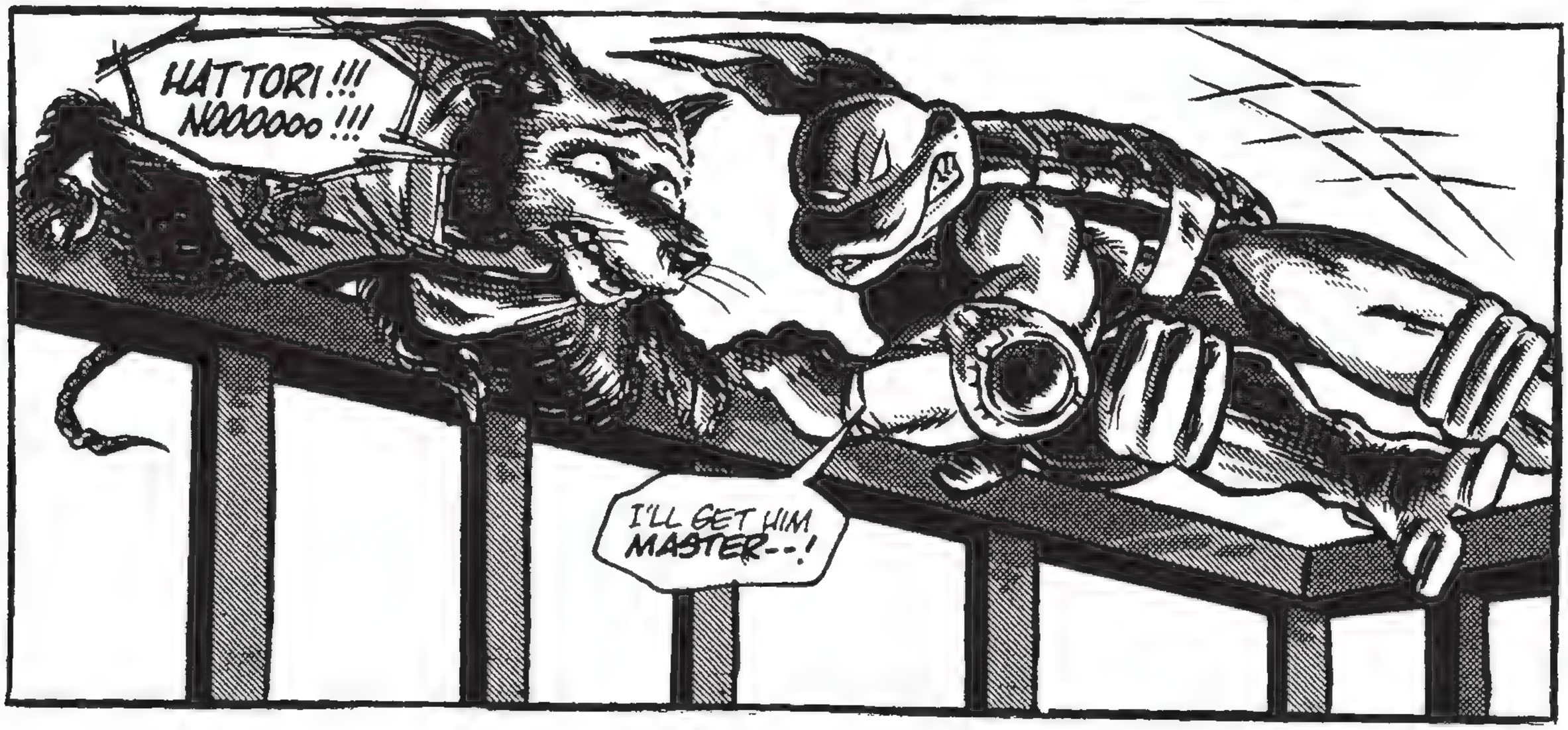
NO... BUT I FEEL... FATHER, I DON'T WANT TO DISHONOR YOU OR THE TRUST YOU PLACE IN ME... BUT I'M NOT SURE I CAN LIVE AS YOU DO... I--I HAVE SOME PLANS OF MY OWN...

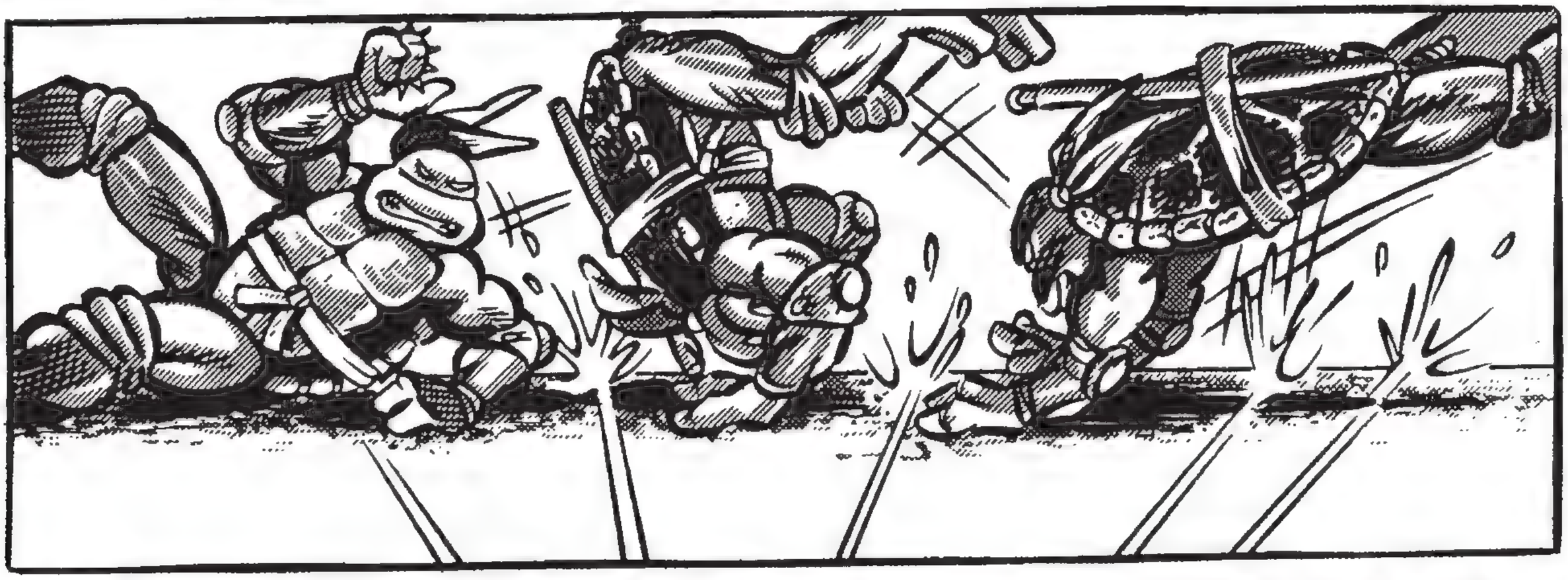
TO DO WHAT? -- LIVE THE **BUSHIDO ETHIC?** BE A **SAMURAI** LIKE MY FATHER THOUGHT HE WAS? I'VE SEEN YOU PRACTICING THAT MARTIAL ARTS CRAP... **GIVE IT UP!** THAT'S OLD STUFF... YOUR GRANDFATHER NEVER COULD SEE **REALITY...**

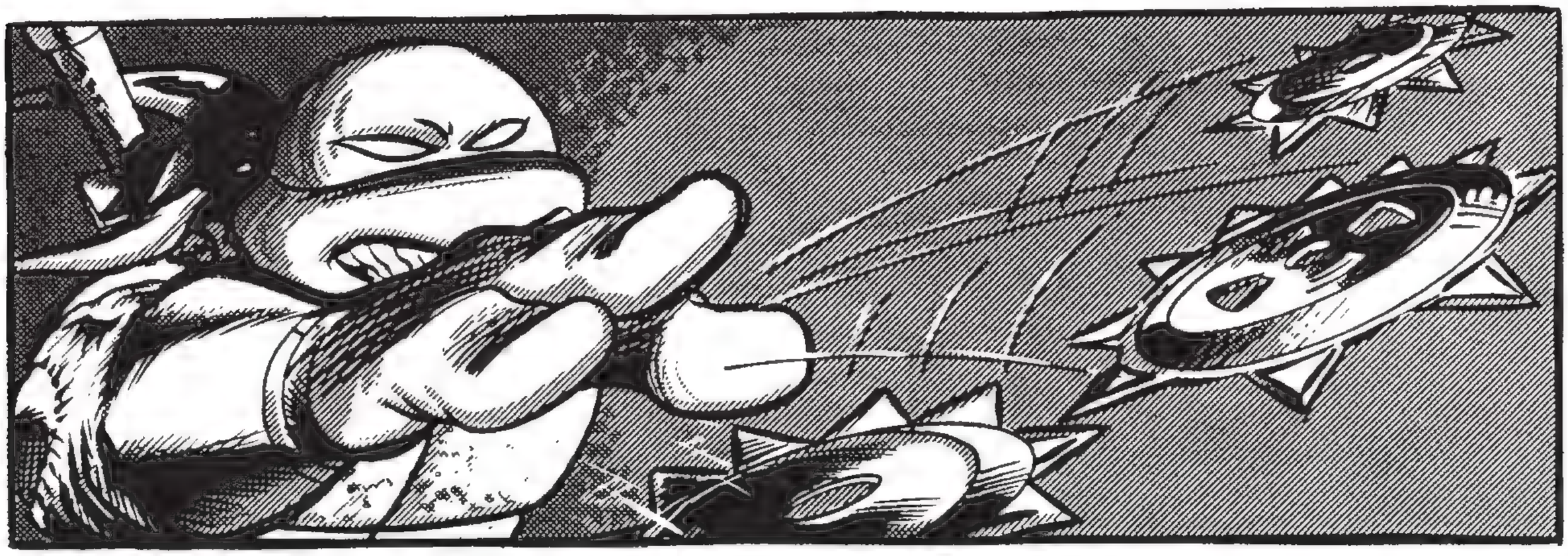
...ALWAYS LIVING IN THE PAST, WHILE I --

--EH?

BDDBBRRAADPP!
GET DOWN, HATTORI!
GET D--
GAH!!!
FATHER--!!!


HATTORI!!!
NOOOOOO!!!
I'LL GET HIM, MASTER--!





MASTER SPLINTER--
LEO! WE HEARD GUNFIRE--!

ARE YOU OKAY--?!

THEY'RE ALL RIGHT, DON--

--BUT THIS POOR GUY'S HAD IT!

OH, NO...

FATHER... FATHER!!! SPEAK TO ME... YOU CAN'T BE DEAD...!

I--I HATED WHAT YOU DID... B--BUT I LOVED YOU FATHER...

AND... AND...

M--MY GOD...

W--WHAT ARE YOU?!!

BE CALM, HATTORI! OPEN YOUR MIND... REJECT PANIC...

A--A G-GIANT TALKING RAT... TURTLE MONSTERS... Y-YOU CAN'T BE REAL--!

I-I MUST BE IN SHOCK! I--IT'S ALL P--PART OF SOME M--MAD DREAM--!

BE SILENT! YOU DO YOUR FATHER NO HONOR WITH YOUR WHIMPERING!

I--I'M LOSING MY MIND...

NO, YOU ARE NOT! I WILL ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN... BUT FIRST LET MY NINJA MOVE YOUR FATHER'S BODY... IT IS PROPER TO SHOW RESPECT FOR THE DEAD...

MASTER SPLINTER-- WHAT SHOULD WE DO NOW?

BAR EVERY DOOR YOU CAN FIND-- BLOCK ALL ENTRANCES TO THIS GARDEN LEVEL! I NEED TIME... AND **NO INTERRUPTIONS!**

MAYBE... THE **ASSASSINS** PUT **DRUGS** IN THE **FOOD**... **YES**, THAT'S IT -- I'M **HALLUCINATING** --!

HATTORI -- LISTEN TO ME! LISTEN TO MY WORDS... HEAR THEIR TRUTH... DO NOT LET THIS BODY CONFUSE YOU... IT HAS BEEN LOANED TO ME, SO THAT MY MIND... MY WORDS... COULD REACH YOU FROM MY **DEATHBED** IN **JAPAN**...

...YOU ARE **GOSEI HATTORI**, SON OF **GOSEI KENJI**... AND I AM **GOSEI HATSUMI**, HIS FATHER... AND YOUR **GRANDFATHER!**

NO NO NO NO NO!!! **THIS IS CRAZY --!** HOW CAN YOU EXPECT ME TO **BELIEVE --!?!!**

I UNDERSTAND... IT IS **DIFFICULT!** TO ACCEPT MY WORDS... YOU NEED A SIGN...

I HAD TRIED TO REACH YOU, IN OTHER WAYS... BUT I WAS TOO WEAK... AND YOU WERE... **UNRECEPTIVE**...

...SO I TRIED... TO LEAVE WITH YOU... A TOKEN OF OUR SHARED HERITAGE...

SCRITCH!

...SEARCH YOUR MEMORY... DO YOU RECALL IT...?

T-- THAT SYMBOL--!

IT-- IT'S THE SAME ONE--

--THE ONE IN MY DREAMS! BUT... WHAT--?!

--WHAT YOU SEE IS THE ANCIENT SYMBOL OF THE GOSEI SAMURAI CLAN... A SIGNET OF POWER... A SYMBOL OF A GREATER LIFE...

... A LIFE WHICH COULD--SHOULD!-- BE YOURS... BUT ONLY IF YOU TRULY WANT IT...!

I-- I KNOW YOU ARE TELLING THE TRUTH... AS CRAZY AS IT SOUNDS. YOU ARE WHO YOU SAY YOU ARE! I--I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT... BUT YOU ARE MY **GRANDFATHER!** AND... AND I KNOW... THAT THIS SYMBOL MEANS...

IT MEANS **POWER!**

IT IS THE CHOICE YOU MUST MAKE-- TO UP HOLD AND CARRY ON THE GOSEI TRADITION-- OR FOLLOW YOUR FATHER'S PATH INTO **OBLIVION!**

THIS LAMP SHOULD DO JUST FINE...!

THERE! THAT'S THE LAST OF 'EM -- ALL THE DOORS ON THIS FLOOR ARE BLOCKED OFF!

YES -- BUT HOW LONG DO YOU THINK THAT LAMP WILL LAST IF THEY REALLY TRY TO BUST THE DOORS DOWN? WHAT DO WE DO THEN?

WE'LL JUST HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT WHEN IT HAPPENS -- BUT WE HAVE TO GIVE MASTER SPLINTER THE TIME HE NEEDS!

TIME IS GROWING SHORT, HATTORI -- MY STRENGTH IS FAILING ... YOU MUST HELP ME...!

AAUHUNNGG--!!! IT--IT HURTS--! I-I DON'T WANT IT! I'M -- I'M NOT READY--!!!

THERE IS NO ONE ELSE WHO CAN CARRY ON OUR FAMILY LINE -- YOU MUST ACCEPT THE TRANSFER... OF MY LIFE FORCE--!!!

...ACCEPT IT... WITH ALL YOUR HEART... OR IT WILL MEAN NOTHING... AND THE GOSEI HERITAGE WILL PASS FROM THIS WORLD FOREVER!

I--I'M TRYING, GRANDFATHER... SO SUDDEN... BUT... I FEEL... SOMETHING EXPANDING... IN MY MIND... UNN!!! YES.. A DOOR IS... OPENING... NOW... I DO... WANT... IT...!!!

YOU ARE WORTHY... OF THE GOSEI NAME... MY GRANDCHILD...

...ACCEPT MY SPIRIT... AND THROUGH ME... THE LOVE OF YOUR ANCESTORS...

TAKE... OUR LIVES...!!!

AHURRGAHHH!!!

AAAAAAAHHRRRRRRGGHAH!!!

IT IS OVER... AND I GO TO MY REST... THANK YOU, FRIEND SPLINTER...

YOU HONOR ME WITH YOUR GRATITUDE, HATSUMI...

...PERHAPS, IN ANOTHER LIFE, WE WILL MEET AGAIN.... FAREWELL...!

UHHHHH... FEEL SO STRANGE... TINGLY...

I'M... BACK-- IN MY OWN BODY! AMAZING...

KRA-AAAAAAA

... THERE WAS A **FIFTH ASSASSIN!**

...AND I AM TOO **WEAK**... FROM THE STRAIN OF **PSYCHIC TRANSFERRAL**... TO FIGHT HIM...!

...AND YOUR STUDENTS ARE GUARDING THE DOORS -- WE'RE **DEFENSELESS --!!!**

NO! YOU CAN FIGHT HIM, **HATTORI!** LET YOURSELF BE GUIDED... LET THE SPIRITS OF THE GOSEI CLAN LEAD YOU... **NOW!!!**

--NOW!!!

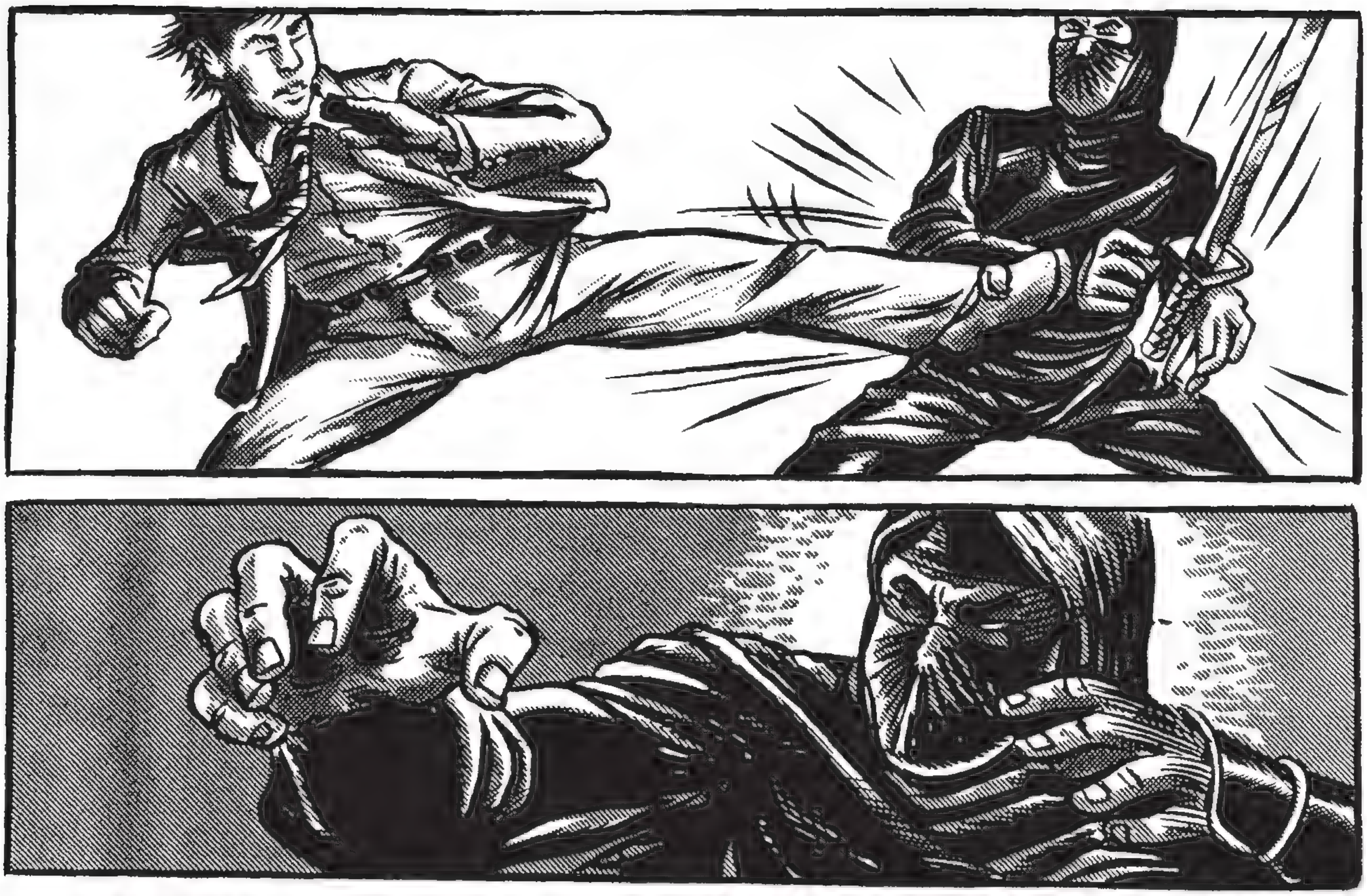
HUH!?
H-HOW DID I DODGE LIKE THAT--?!

CHK

AND--EVEN BEFORE I THROW THIS --

IT--IT'S LIKE -- I'VE DONE THIS A THOUSAND TIMES BEFORE...

--I KNOW MY AIM WILL BE TRUE--!



CRAK!

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT... I JUST KILLED A **HIGHLY TRAINED ASSASSIN**... WITH MY **BARE HANDS!** AND IT'S LIKE... I DIDN'T EVEN DO IT... MYSELF...

THE SPIRITS OF YOUR ANCESTORS CAME TO YOUR AID... THEY NOW LIVE WITHIN YOU... THE **WARRIORS**, THE **SAMURAI**-- THEY HELPED YOU TO FIGHT THAT KILLER BUT... YOU WILL FIND... YOU HAVE OTHER **ANCESTORS**... **POETS**... **ARTISTS**... **LOVERS**...

...AND I WILL COME TO KNOW THEM ALL... LISTEN, I... WHATEVER-- WHO-EVER YOU ARE... THANK YOU... FOR MY GRANDFATHER... FOR **EVERYTHING!**

I WAS HAPPY TO AID YOU... AND YOUR GRANDFATHER...

...REMEMBER ALWAYS WHAT HE HAS GIVEN YOU... AND THAT WHAT YOU DO WITH IT... IS YOUR CHOICE...

"... MAY YOU CHOOSE WELL!"

LATER...

...AND ALL THAT TIME WE JUST THOUGHT YOU WERE BEING KIND OF... WELL... OBSESSIVE!

...AND SECRETIVE! BUT WE NEVER WOULD HAVE GUESSED...

...THAT I HAD EXCHANGED BODIES WITH ANOTHER? **HA, HA! NO,** YOU COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN. BUT YOU ACQUITTED YOURSELVES WELL--HATTORI OWES HIS LIFE IN NO SMALL PART TO YOUR ACTIONS! I AM PROUD OF YOU, MY SONS...!

THANK YOU, MASTER SPLINTER! I DON'T ENVY HIM, THOUGH...

...HE'S GOT SOME HEAVY DECISION-MAKING AHEAD OF HIM!

YES... AND WE HAVE SLEEP AHEAD OF US...

...LET'S GO HOME...

...AND YOU, MICHAELANGELO-- STOP GOOFING AROUND!

OW!

THE END

ANNOTATIONS

KEVIN EASTMAN

This was a very different issue for us, and for a wide variety of reasons. Although many of them have this organic nature to the story development and artistic completion side, this issue kind of foreshadowed the intensity and scheduling nightmare the issues were becoming as the company expanded. We tried to stay on track.

Originally, Pete and I had come up with this idea to explore the "growing-up part" of the TMNTs' history—as we simply jumped right into the "teenage" part of their life from issue #1—and we thought it would be cool to do a "pre-teenage" story, and started kicking around ideas. We had also been working with and publishing the work of a number of artists we really liked and admired, and we were bringing them in more often to help finish issues so we could try and keep up with the schedule.

This time we thought we'd take even more of a break, maybe try to get into the next issue while this was being finished by another artist—and Michael Dooney was elected to the task. Now typically, Pete and I would finish the plot, I would break it down, Pete would script, and then we'd draw it together. But the plan here was once Pete finished the script, we'd hand it off to Mike and he'd nail it.

Then we signed a deal with First Publishing to reprint the first three issues of *TMNT* in color by the year's end, and the plan fell apart. First, Pete and I did touch-ups on the black-and-white artwork to be colored for the volume. Then I decided to color the first issue. Then paint a new cover for it. Then we decided to add two new short stories to the collection. And then…

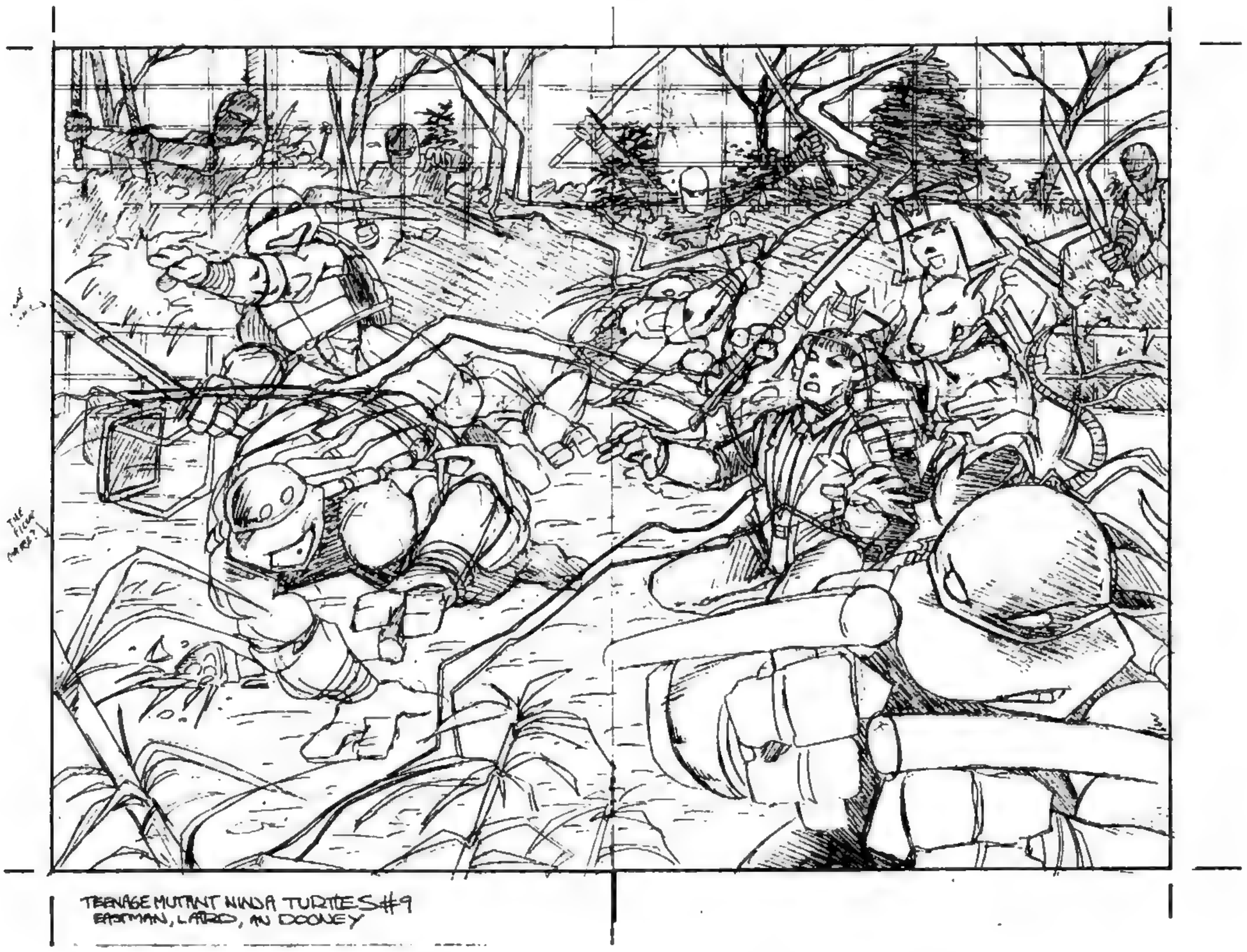
Well, you get the idea. Something had to give. So Pete and Mike picked up the slack on the issue so I could work on the collection—and the results were awesome. It really was the first time we'd given up all our control on the main book. Sure, we'd worked with other artists on different short stories for this and that, but Mike pretty much did all the penciling. And then the entire studio—Mike Dooney, Ryan Brown, Jim Lawson—as well as Pete and I, did the inks and tones. Crazy.

The cover was probably the coolest complete collaboration, as I penciled it, Pete inked it, and Mike, who was a much better painter than all of us, finished it.

The story itself was a lot of fun. We tried to make the Turtles younger and goofier on the one hand, yet there was always the presence of them having to deal with more mature issues on the other. In this case, death and reincarnation.

It was cool to try out some new costumes as well, some we'd even doodled up back in 1984 that we'd finally get the chance to use. And, of course, there were the weapons. We had Don with the staff, and Leo using the swords—but we hadn't had Mike and Raph zero in on their final trademark choice yet… but they were close.

Issue #9 was a great experience for all of us. It was one of the original fifteen books that I call the "foundation works."



ANNOTATIONS

PETER LAIRD

I don't remember all of the scheduling issues as clearly as Kevin apparently does, but what he says sounds pretty likely—it WAS a crazy time back then. And we were fortunate to have buds like Jim, Mike, Steve, and Ryan to help us out.

One other thing about this issue that was unusual was that I did all the layouts for it, from which Mike Dooney then drew the final pencils.

It's an interesting departure from the other TMNT comics we'd done up until that time, for the reasons that Kevin mentions. Also, it was the first time, if memory serves, where we really focused on Splinter's "mystic" abilities—being able to communicate on the "astral plane" with Gosei Hatsumi—and not just his physical martial arts prowess. It was a significant step in the development of the character of Splinter.

Incidentally, I've always regretted that we never did a "One Issue Micro-Series" starring Splinter. That could have been a lot of fun.

And thinking about character development, here's one of my pinup drawings from the early days, of Leonardo (*image to the left*).

It's interesting to compare this to later drawings, to see how my style of drawing the guys changed over the years. And not just the style... you can see by the fact that Leo has one broad diagonal strap across his chest—instead of the two narrower ones we later settled on—that some of the costume details were still in flux.

And believe it or not, Kevin was going to throw this pinup of Donatello away (*image below*)! I'm glad I was there to stop him and beg him to give this drawing to me, which he graciously did.

To this day I can't understand why he didn't like it—I think it's a very cool high-contrast ink drawing with a nifty experimental color effect (not to mention it shows Donatello in an alternate costume design we were thinking about using).

EASTMAN AND LAIRD'S
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA
TURTLES

NO. 10
$1.50
$2.25 IN
CANADA
APRIL
1987

#10

SILENT PARTNER

LEO...!!! MY GOD...!

WHAT HAPPENED!!?

IS HE ALIVE...?

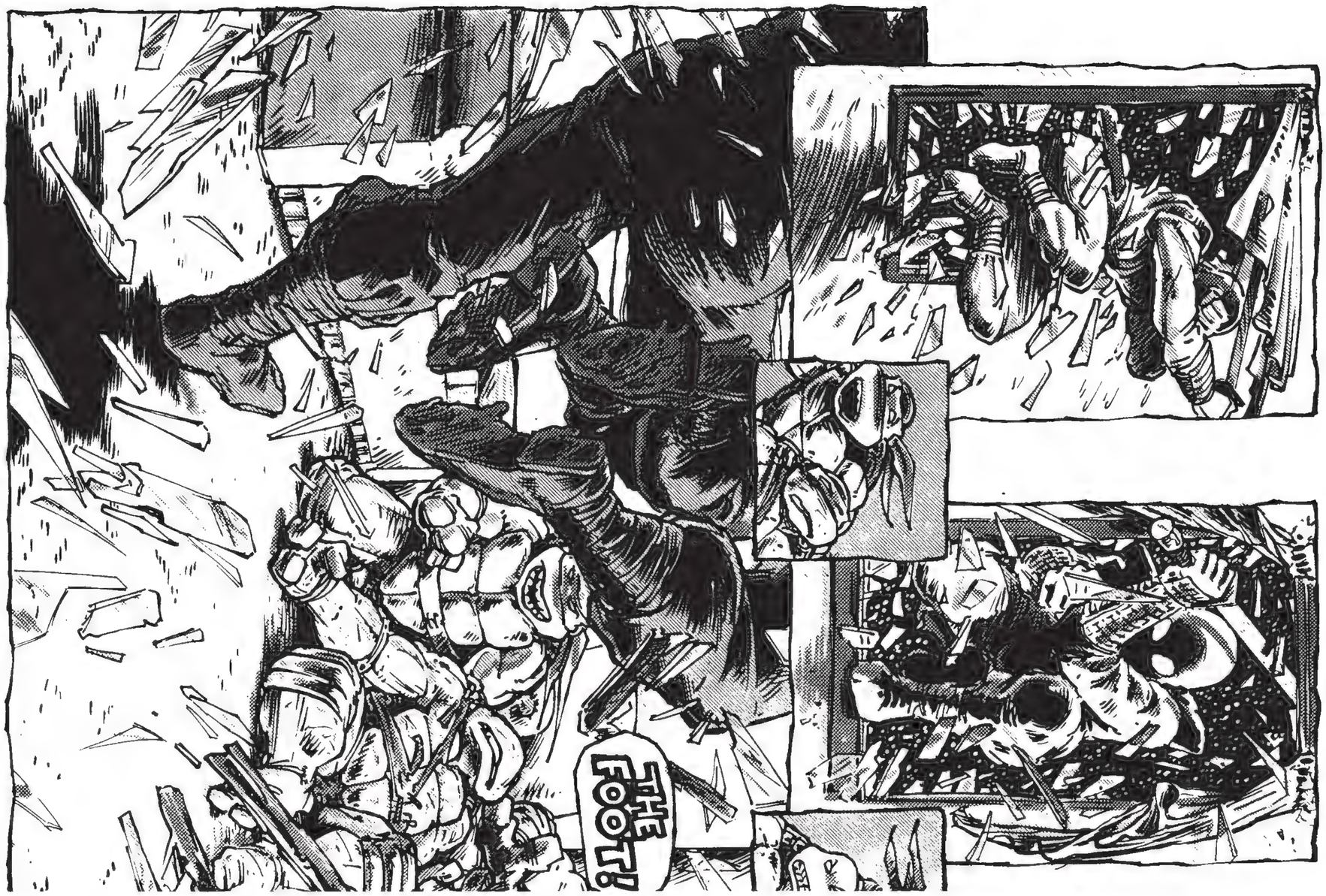
YEAH, BUT JUST BARELY... WHO DID THIS!!?

NO... IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!

THE SHREDDER...

HE SAID... THE SHREDDER!

EASTMAN, LAIRD, DOONEY, AN' LAVIGNE


THE FOOT!

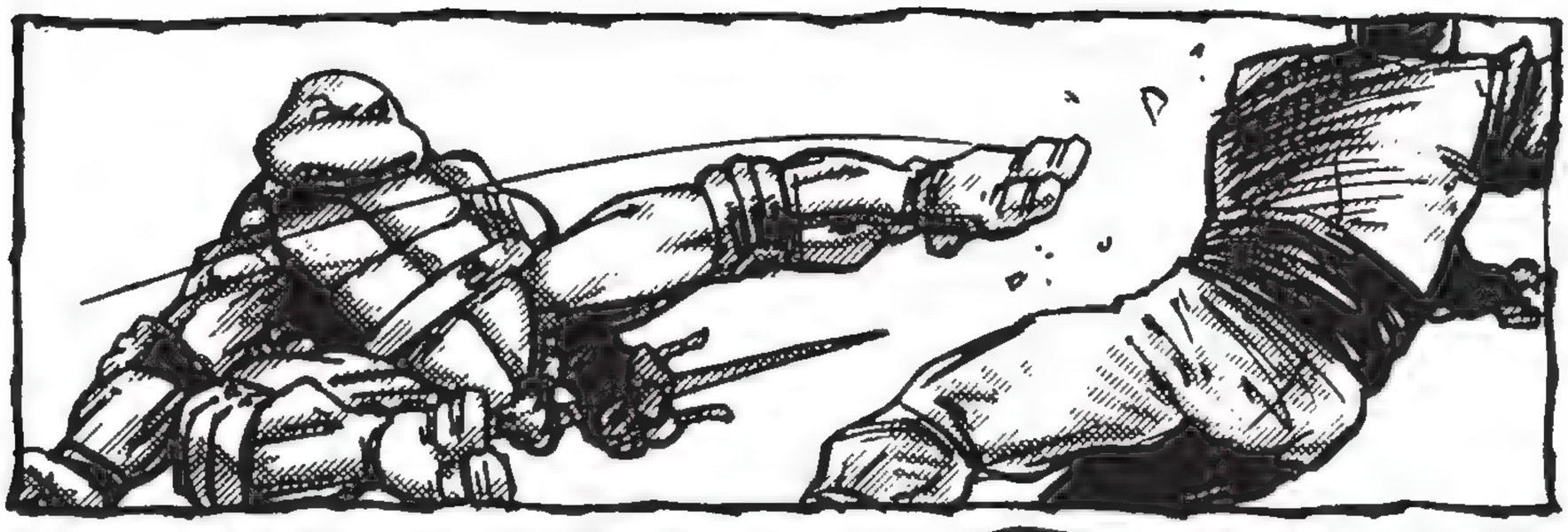
MASTER SPLINTER, APRIL--! GRAB LEO-- WE'LL COVER YOU!

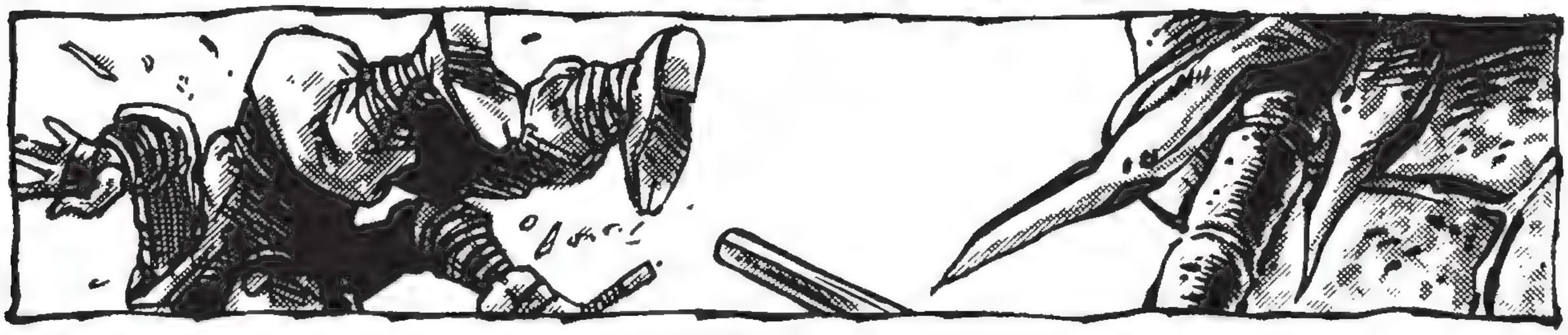
BAD TIMING, SCUM--

--REAL BAD!

SPLINTER, I... I...

DON'T THINK, APRIL-- DO!





SPLINTER, APRIL -- TAKE LEO AND GO FOR THE STAIRWAY... WE'LL FOLLOW WHEN WE SECURE THIS FLOOR! LOOKS LIKE THE **JUNK SHOP** IS OUR BEST **WAY OUT!**

BACK THE WAY YOU CAME, **BUTTHEAD!**

UHH... APRIL... I... CAN WALK...

C'MON LEO... JUST RELAX... WE'LL CARRY YOU!

I'M OK... I... I... CAN... WALK...

EH--?

RAPHAEL! THE WINDOW--!

GOT IT!

THUNGGG

TAKE OFF, ROBINHOOD!

BASH

STHEP!

QUICKLY, MY SON!

TOK

THE FOOT WOULD NOT ATTACK US HERE -- UNLESS THEY SURROUNDED US IN FORCE!

WITH LEO INCAPACITATED, ROOF TOP ESCAPE IS IMPOSSIBLE, EVEN IF THAT PATH WERE CLEAR. SO! -- DON AND MIKE, HELP ME AND APRIL GET LEO DOWNSTAIRS. RAPHAEL, STAY HERE TO COVER OUR REAR -- AND KILL THE LIGHTS!

LIGHTS OUT!

JUST COVER US, BUCKWHEAT -- NO HEROICS! GOT IT?!

NO PROB, KEMO SABE!

QUICK AND QUIET, NOW!

HEH HEH...

APRIL... HELP ME... STAND UP...

OH, LEO...

WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO YOU...?

SHHH... L-LISTEN...

SOME HOW... THE SHREDDER WAS RETURNED... AND... FOUND US... HE... MEANS TO KILL US...

...KILL YOU!

RUN, APRIL-- GET AWAY! THIS... IS OUR FIGHT... OUR FATE!

NO, LEO-- YOU'RE MY FAMILY NOW-- I WON'T LEAVE YOU!

NOW STAND STILL! YOU WEIGH A TON!

LEAN AGAINST THE WALL HERE-- CAN YOU STAND?-- I'LL GET THE DOOR!

CLICK!

WAIT...!

THE... DOOR...?

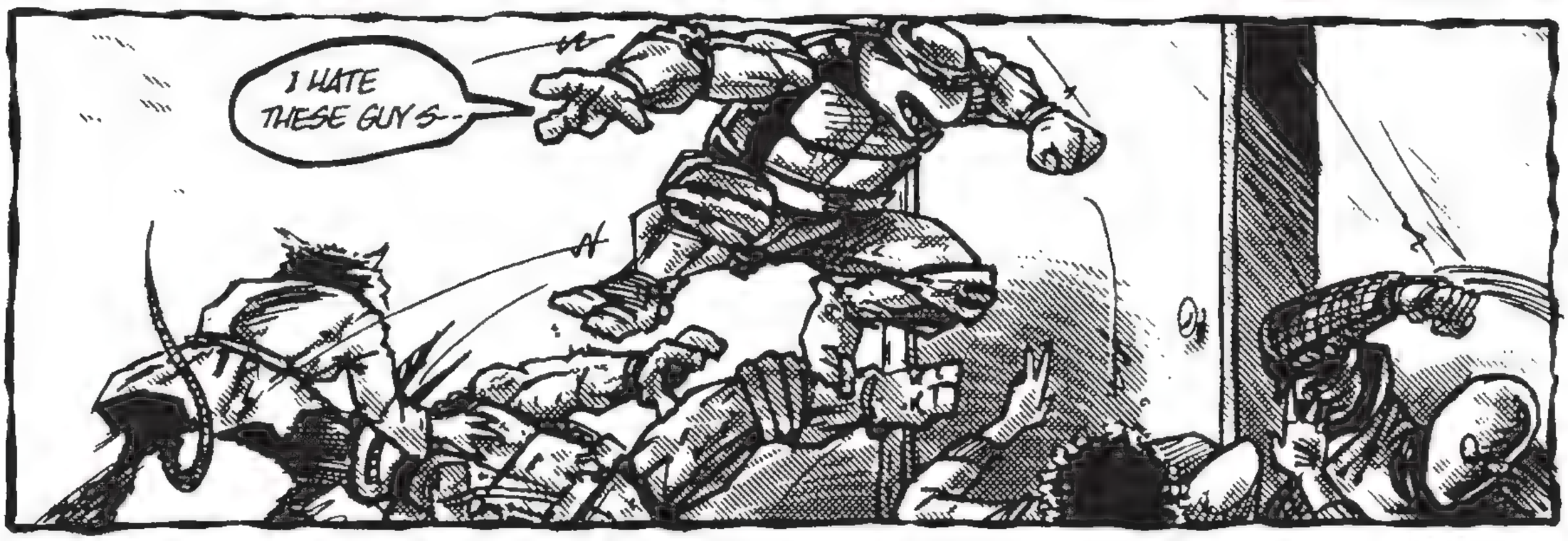
NO...! APRIL--!

CLICK

NO...

NOOO!!

HOLY!!!
ARGGH--!
CRUMP


I HATE THESE GUYS--

-- MR. FOOT, MEET MR. FIST!
BAP

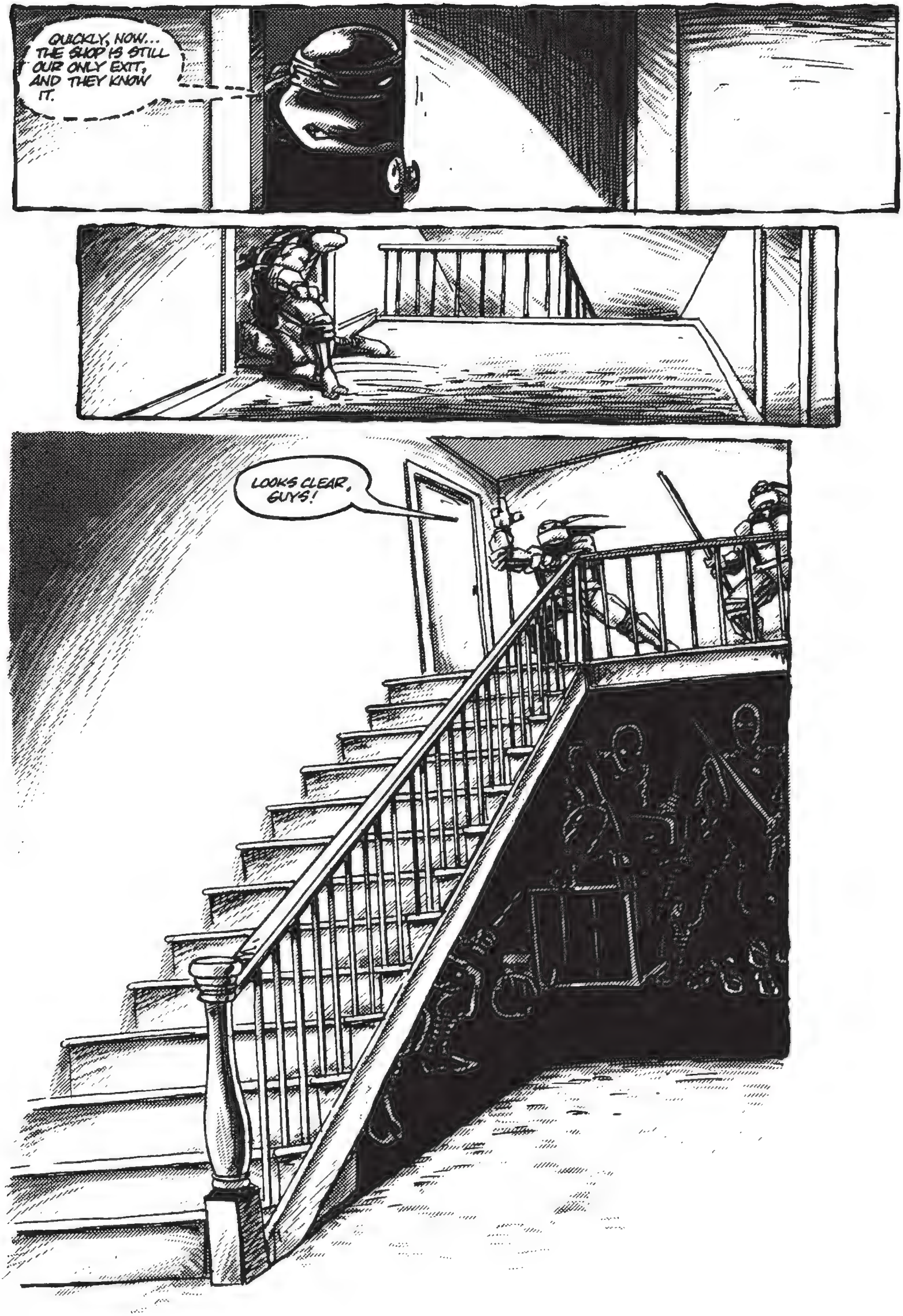
YIKES-- EVERYONE O.K.?!

FORTUNATELY, **YES**! THIS MAKES TWO TIMES THEY CAUGHT US **UNAWARE**, MY SONS; I WANT IT TO BE THE **LAST**!

YOU O.K. APRIL? **APRIL?!**

Y... YEAH... I...I GUESS... T-THAT MAN.. HE WOULD'VE K...

SHHHH, DON'T WORRY. NO ONE WILL HURT YOU AS LONG AS WE'RE **ALIVE**!


QUICKLY, NOW... THE SHOP IS STILL OUR ONLY EXIT, AND THEY KNOW IT.
LOOKS CLEAR, GUYS!

COME ON, FELLAS, I KNOW YOU'RE OUT THERE... THE CURIOSITY MUST BE KILLING YOU!

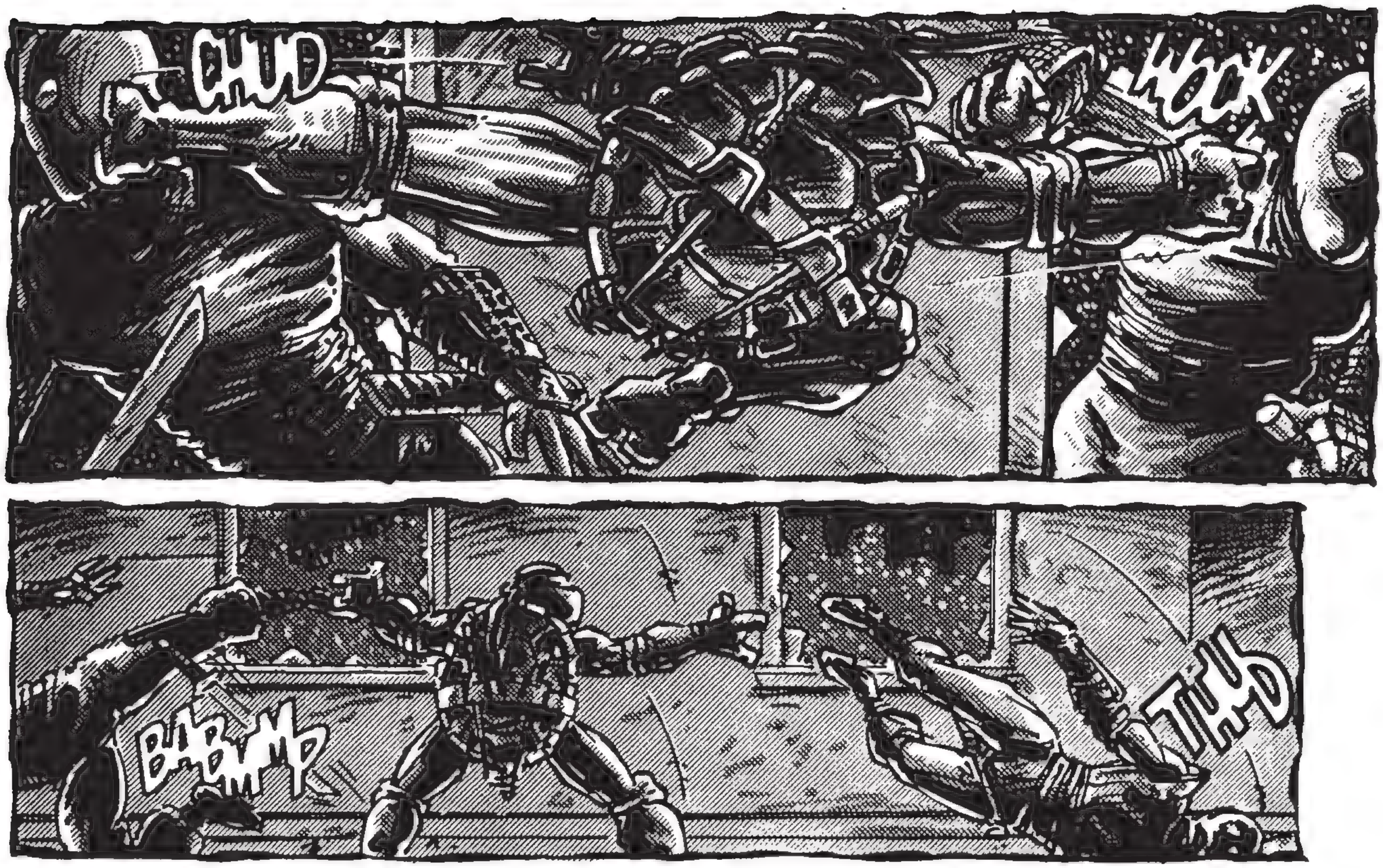
DON'T YA WANT TO POKE YOUR HEAD IN TA SEE WHO WON?

ALI... NICE.

CRUNCH

SPLAK

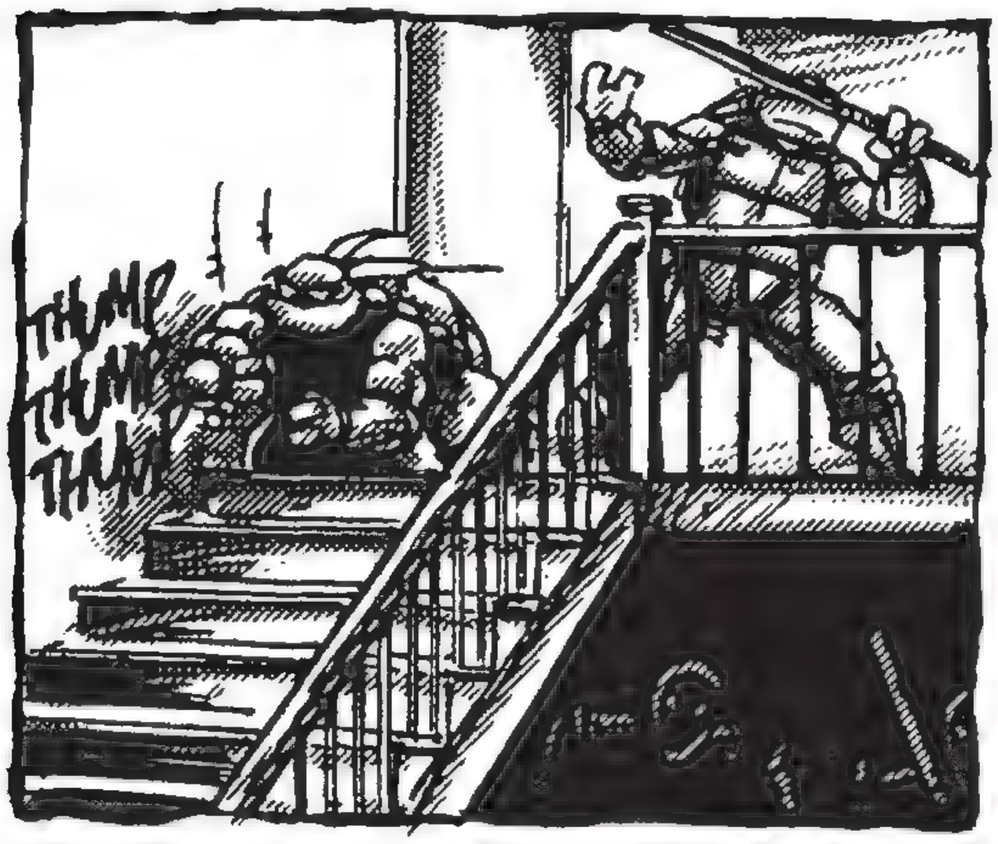
WUGGA, WUGGA, GAIJIN -- IT'S GO TIME!

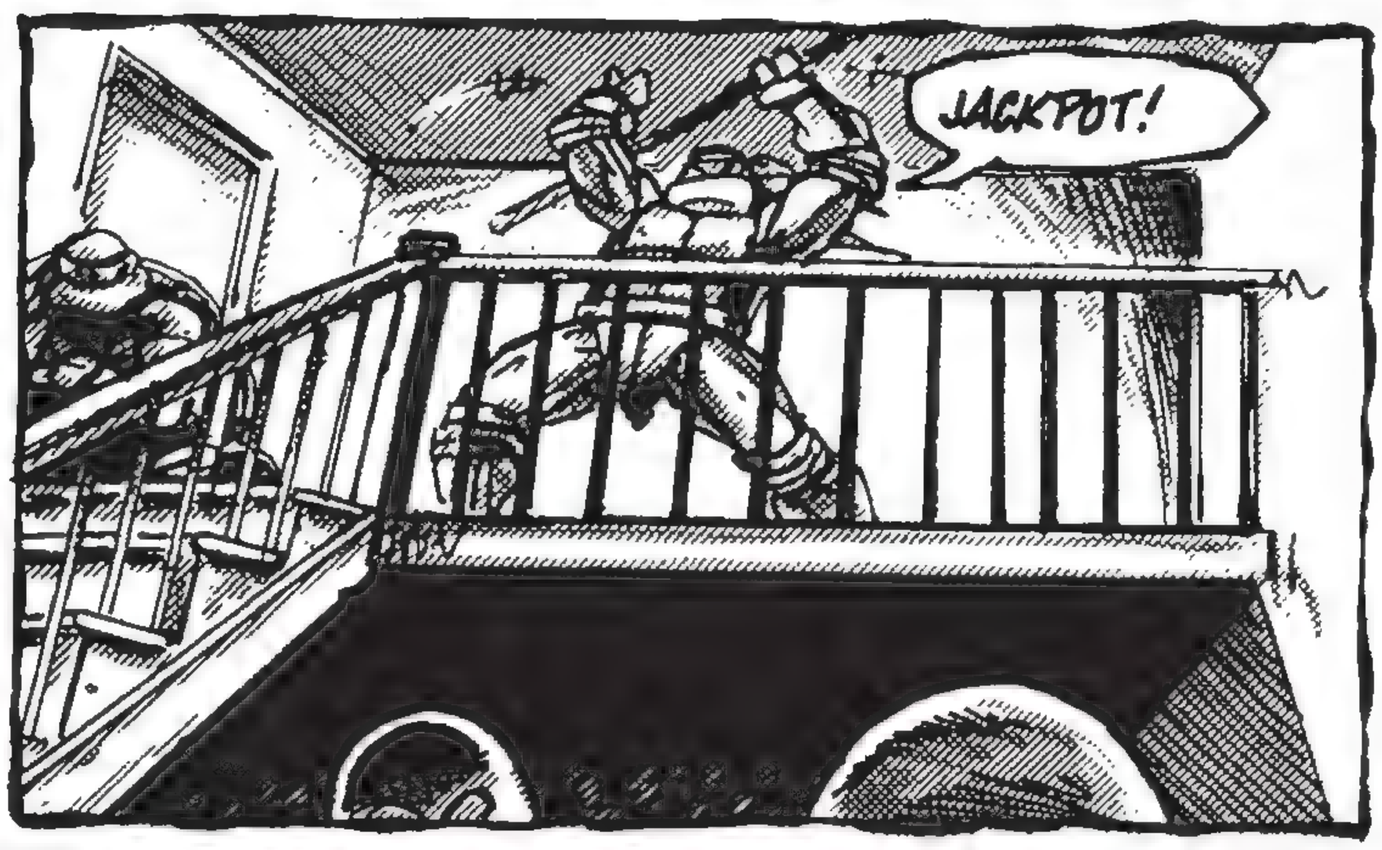

CHUD
HOOK
BA BOOM
THUD

HISTORY...
...DITTO!
"YOU HAVE DONE WELL, WEED HOPPER!"

I'VE GOT TO GET SPLINTER TO SAY THAT JUST ONCE! HA. HA. HA. HA.!

COME ON-- EVERYONE DOWN TO THE SHOP...


THUMP THUMP THUMP


JACKPOT!

YOU FLUSHED TWO, MIKE...

...COULD BE A THIRD!
I'M ON IT!

BASH

THUMP

NOW IT'S CLEAR... LET'S ROLL!

KO'D TWO TAIL GUNNERS, GUYS! HOW'S IT GOING HERE?

SHHHH, RAPHAEL! JOIN YOUR BROTHERS, THEY MAY NEED YOU.

HOW'S IT LOOK, MIKE?

EASY, LEO... JUST A FEW MORE STEPS.

DARK-- CAN'T SEE A THING.

I'VE GOT A BAD FEELING...

LET ME GO FIRST, MIKE!

SSHHHH!

EASE RIGHT... GO FOR THE BACK DOOR.

CLICK!

AW, NUTS!

TOYS
COMICS
OLD COMICS 3 FOR 1.00
BOOKS 25¢
BARGAIN BIN!
CHASE 'FLASH'
MOXI

HEY-- WAIT A MINUTE...

WHAT'S ALL THIS?!

YOU AREN'T THE SAME GOOD LOOKING BUNCH A' DUDES I FOLLOWED IN HERE A MINUTE AGO-- I THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE A HAPPENING GIG!

KILL HIM.

HEY, PAL-- I USED TO BE A BOUNCER AT TORCHY'S, YA KNOW-- I'VE THROWN TEN GUYS YOUR SIZE OUT, ALL AT ONCE!

OR SHOULD I SAY WE...

OH, HECK, I CAN'T TAKE ALL THE CREDIT, I DID HAVE A LITTLE HELP.

I'D LIKE YA TA MEET THE BOYS...

THEY'RE **DYING** TO MEET YOU!

GOONGALA!
GOONGALA!

CASEY--!?

ALL RIGHT!!!

WHO...?!

ZUNGA ZUNGA!

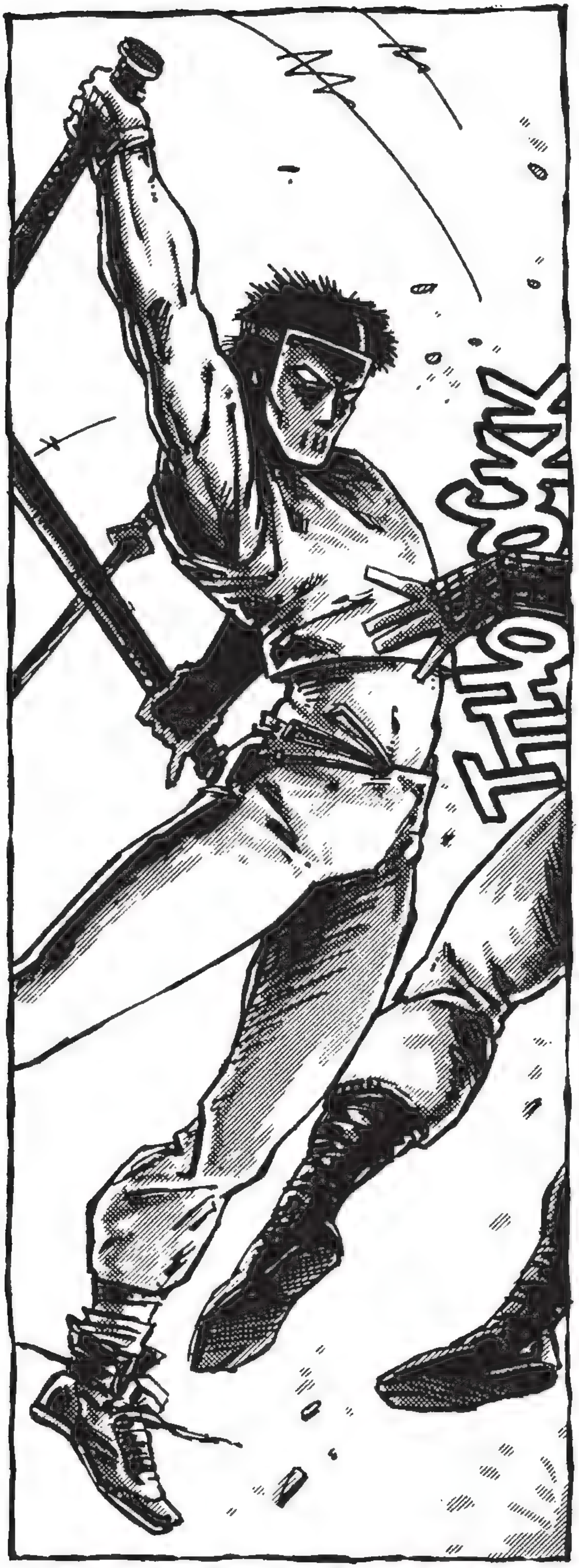
TAKE 'EM DOWN, COMRADES!

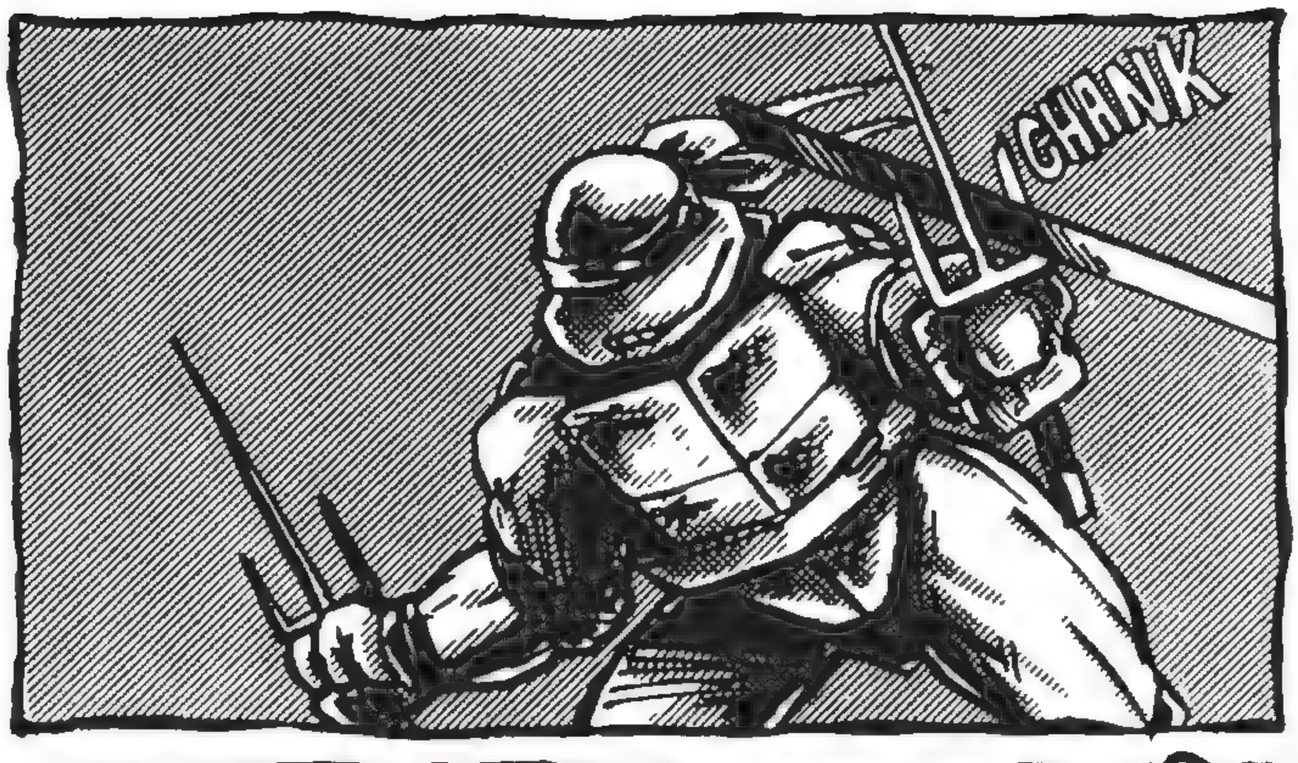
WHOKK

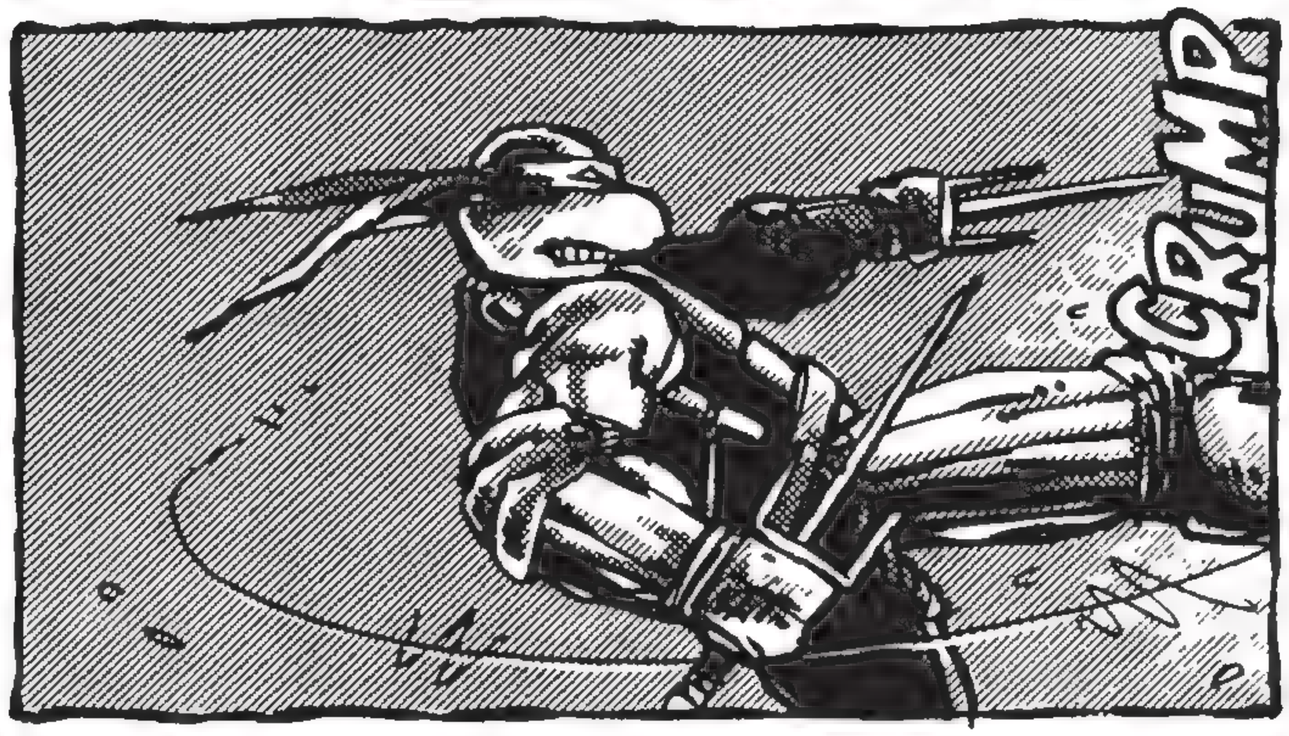
BOUT BEHIND YA, PAL!

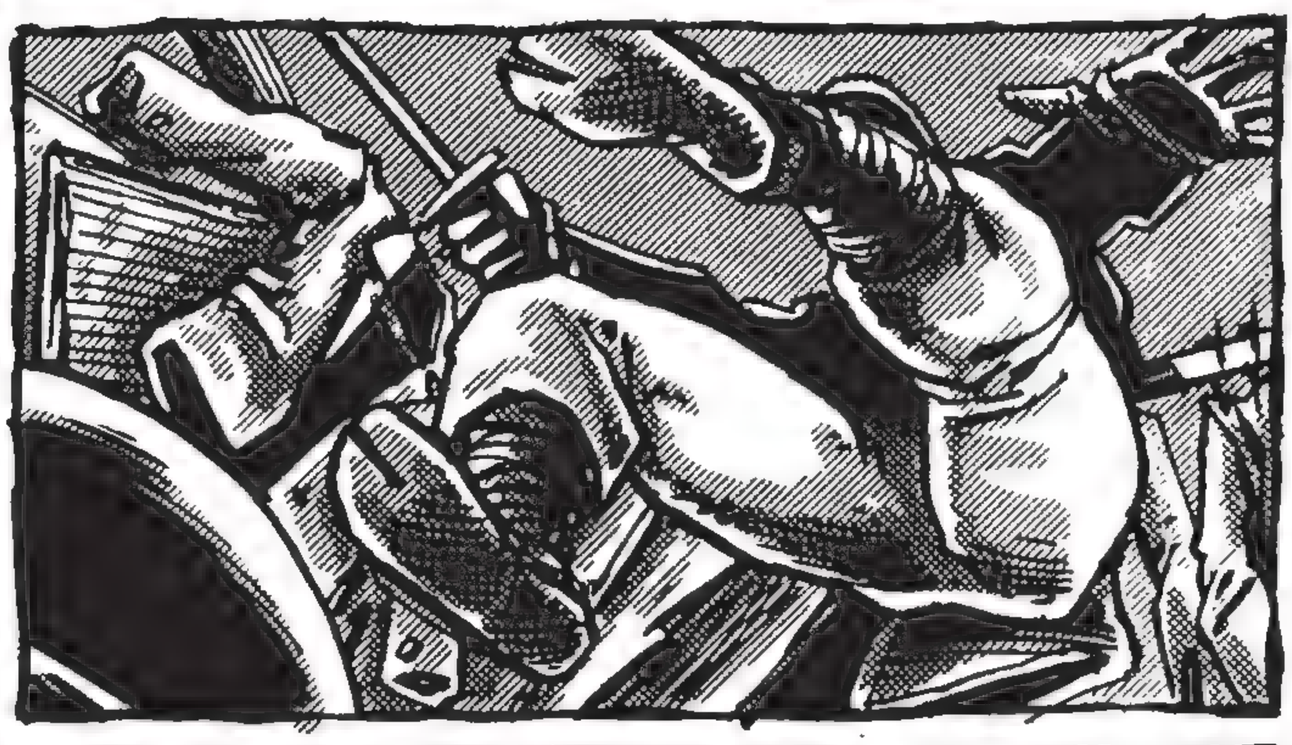
BAP

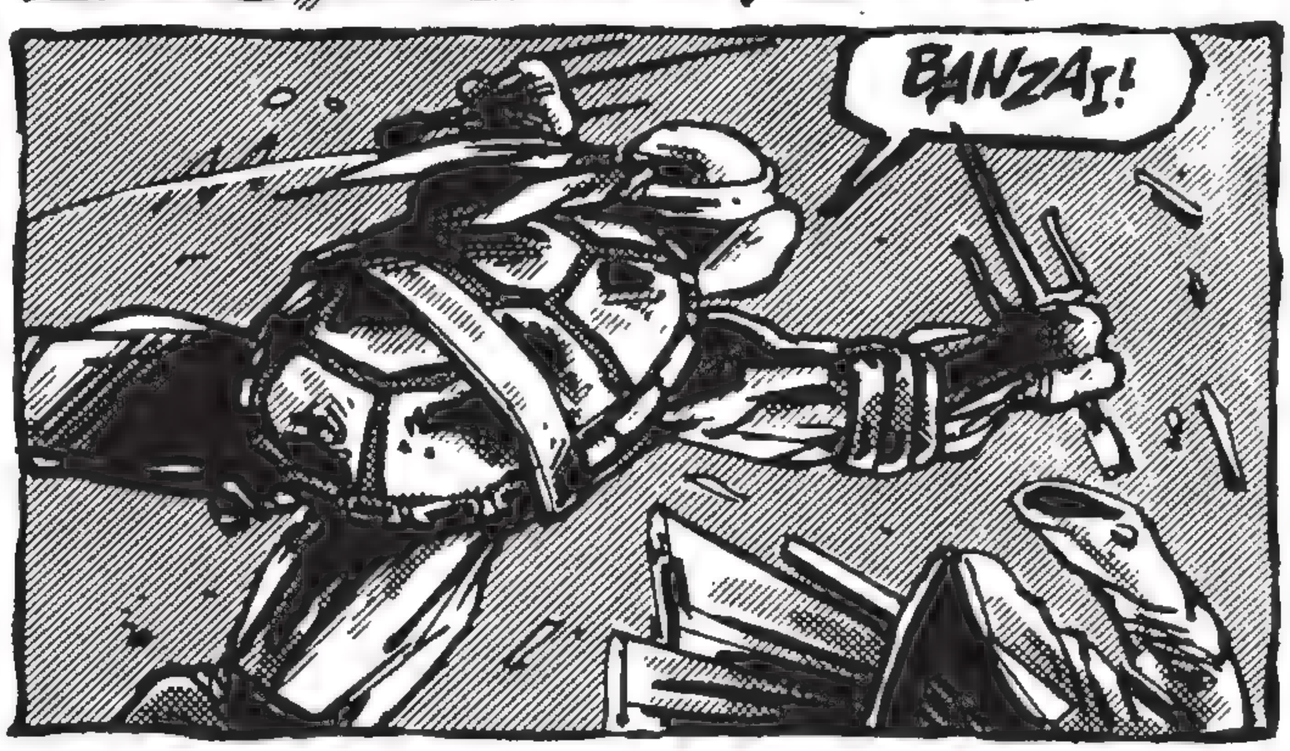
OHOK


THOOCK

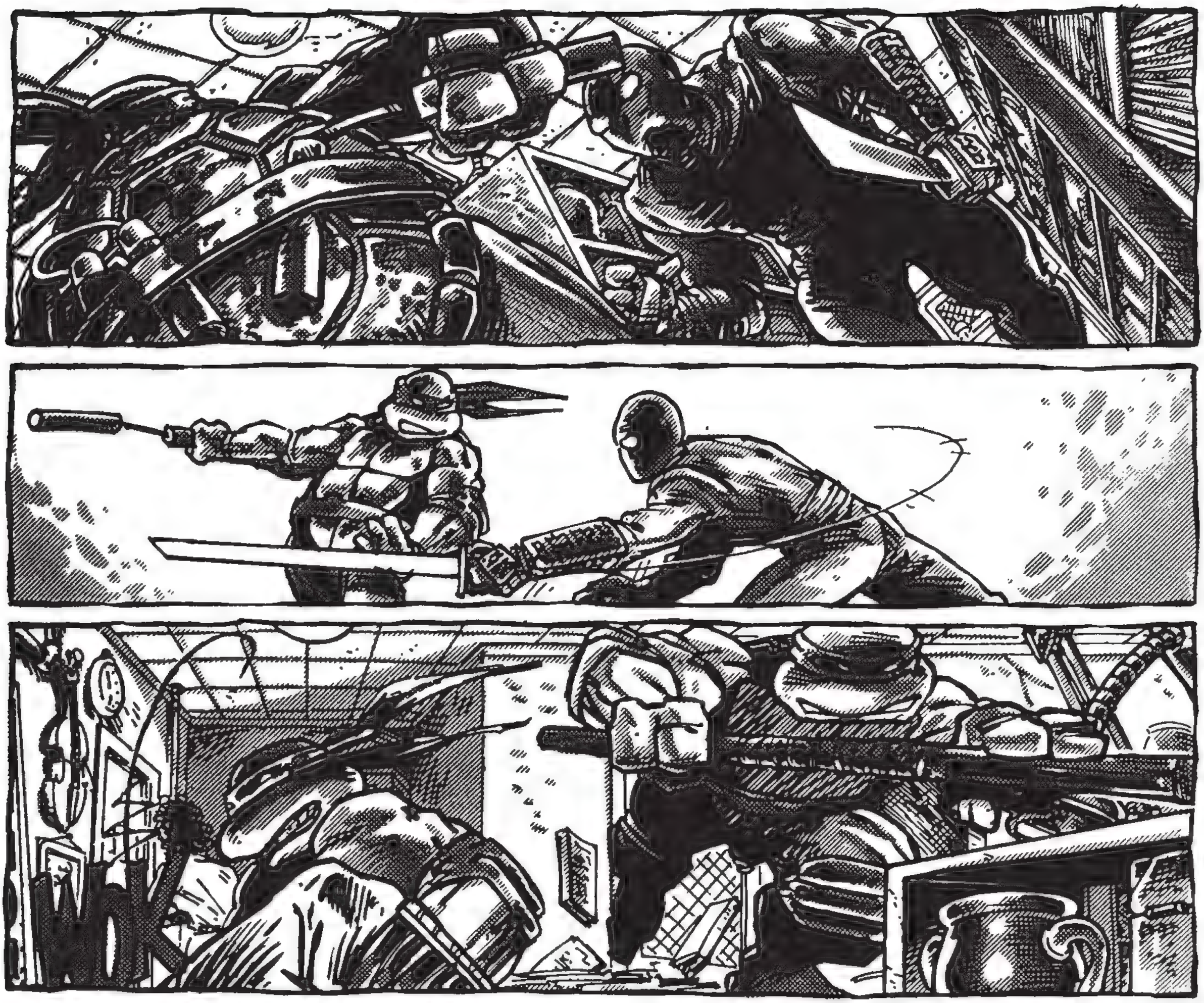

CHANK


CRUMP




BANZAI!

EXIT
FIRE EXIT
APRIL, GET TO THE REAR EXIT-- QUICKLY!



UUH--! C'MON, OPEN-- OPEN, DAMN IT!
FIRE EXIT
THEY MUST HAVE SEALED IT-- FROM THE OUTSIDE!

THEN-- OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO FIGHT OUR WAY OUT THE FRONT DOOR!
NO...

HAH!

TOK

TOK

CAR 54, RESPONDING TO DISTURBANCE ON 23RD STREET--NEAR THE SECOND TIME AROUND SHOP...

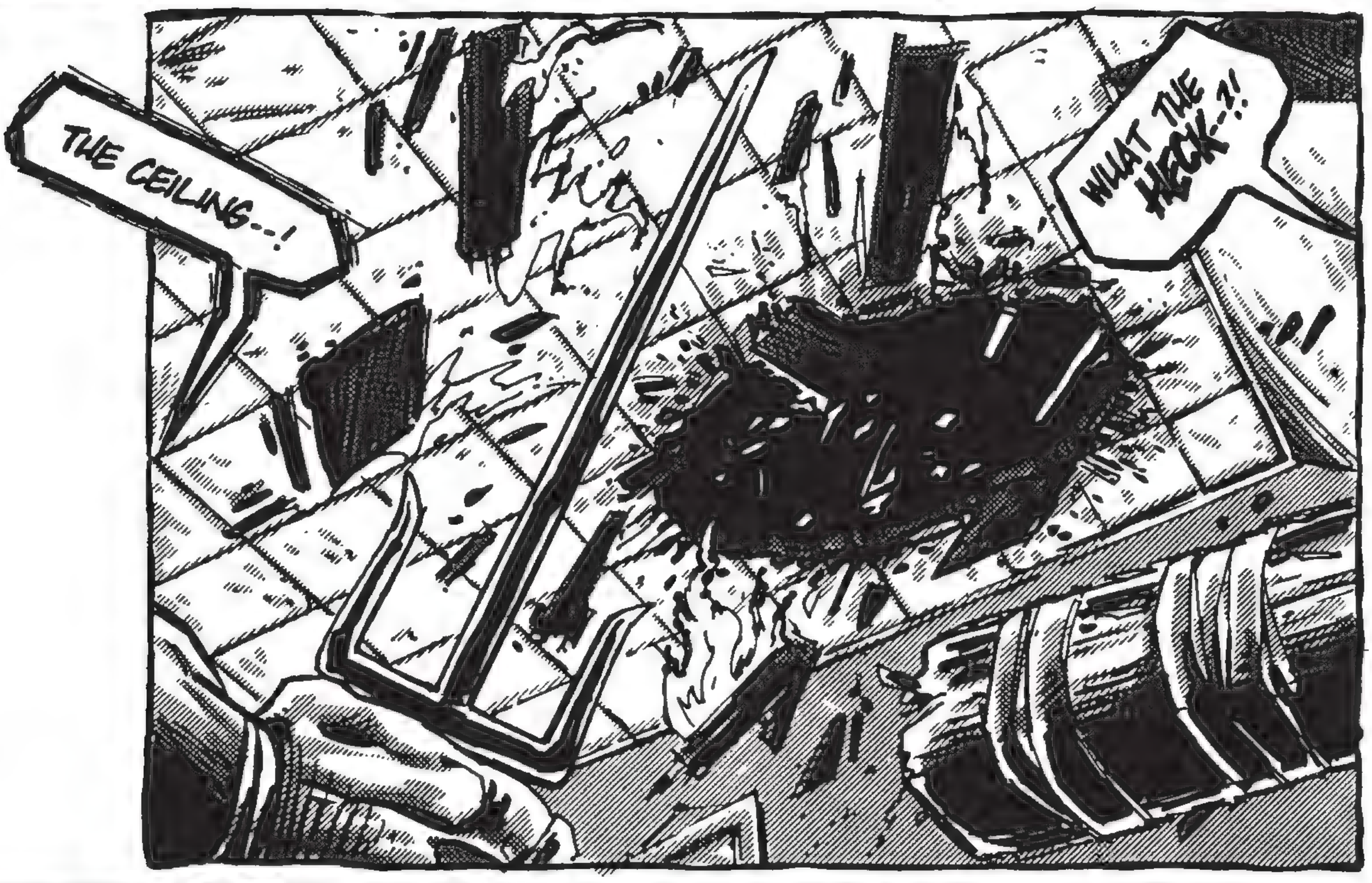
WEEOOO!

...REQUEST BACK-UP!

FWP

HA, HA, HA... CASEY RULES!

GAH!
FHOOM
YIKES!


THE CEILING--!
WHAT THE HECK--?!

MORE NINJA!
THUD

KILL THEM!
KRAK
SPANG
GAHH!
ENOUGH!

YOUR LUCK HAS ENDED HERE, FOOL..

WUMP

UFF!

--NOW YOU SHALL BE THE FIRST--

WUMP

--TO DIE!

WRONG!

UFF!

YOU FORGOT ONE THING--

--OUR TEAMWORK!

SPLINTER, WAIT!

THERE'S ANOTHER WAY-- THIS OLD WALK-IN COOLER!

FIRE EXIT

THERE USED TO BE A GROCERY STORE HERE... BEFORE MY DAD STARTED THIS JUNK SHOP!

I REMEMBER WHEN WE MOVED IN, THERE WAS A HOLE IN THE WALL WHERE A COOLING UNIT WAS REMOVED --

-- THERE! BEHIND THOSE CRATES!

MY SONS-- WE'VE FOUND AN ESCAPE ROUTE! THIS WAY--!

HEY, GUYS -- WE'RE OUTTA HERE!

NO PROB!

DEFINITELY!

AH, DISPATCH, THIS IS CAR 54 AT THE, AH, SECOND TIME AROUND SLOP.- WE'VE DEFINITELY GOT SOMETHIN' GOIN' DOWN HERE! LOOKS LIKE A FIRE'S STARTIN', TOO!

WWHEEOO

DAD NEVER--OOF!-- NEVER GOT AROUND TO FIXING THIS PROPERLY--

OUTSIDERS--OUR TIME HAS ELAPSED, MY NINJA...

...VANISH.

WHEE-OOOO WH

BUT THIS WAR IS FAR FROM OVER...

WHAT'S UP--?!

APRIL'S FOUND A WAY OUT!

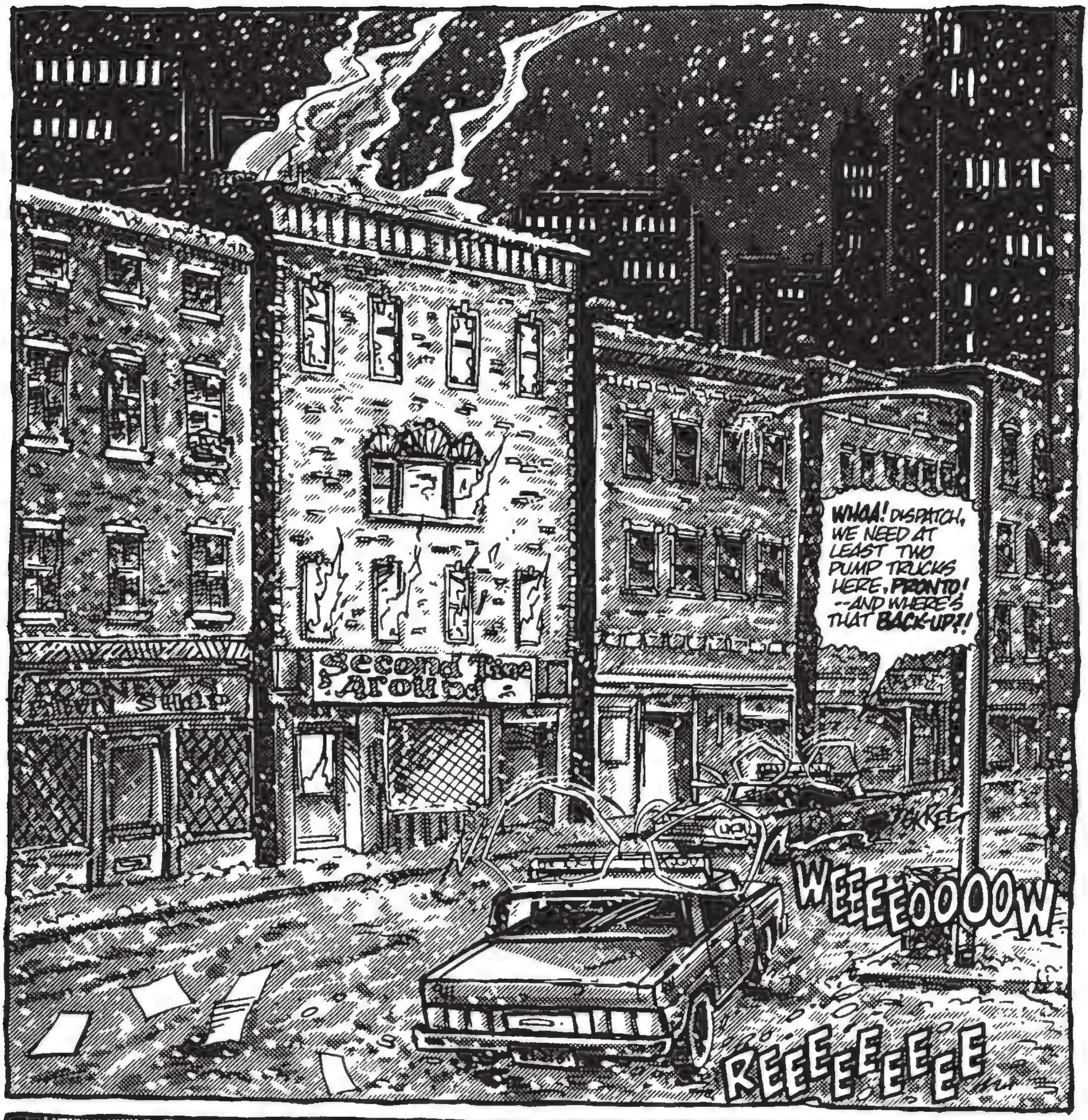
CREAK

...THE PHOENIX HAS RISEN... MY DESTINY IS TRUE!

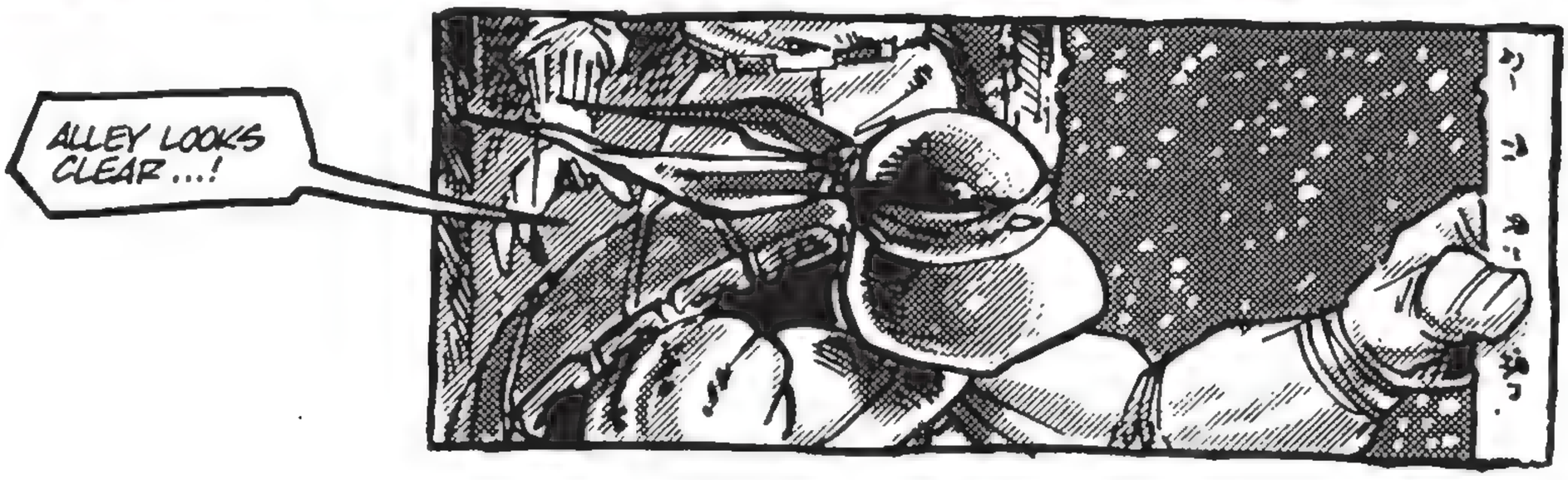
WATCH YOUR BACKS, GAIJIN!

CIAO, DUDE!

BLEAH!


Second Time Around
WHOA! DISPATCH, WE NEED AT LEAST TWO PUMP TRUCKS HERE, PRONTO! --AND WHERE'S THAT BACK-UP?!
WEEEOOOOW
REEEEEEEE

--THAT'S IT!
LEMME CHECK IT OUT...!


ALLEY LOOKS CLEAR...!

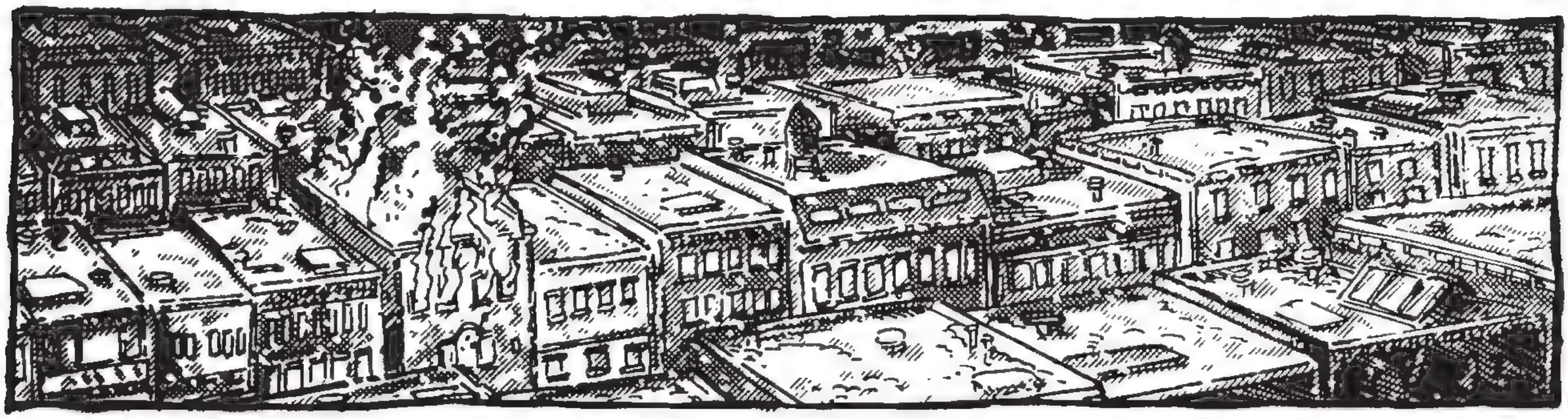
HEY, LOOKS PRETTY SAFE TO ME-- NO ONE AROUND!

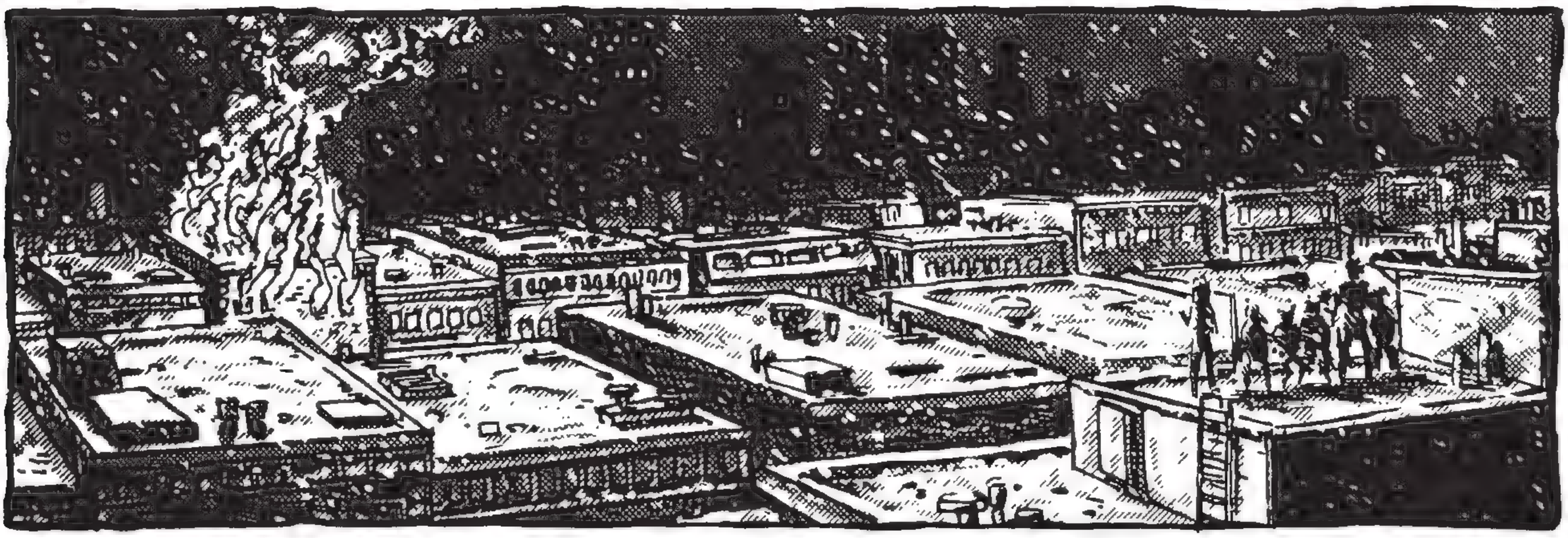
NO ONE WE CAN SEE--STAY ALERT!

THE FIRE THEY STARTED WITH THAT BOMB IS SURE TO BRING THE FIRE TRUCKS--

--AND WITH THE COPS OUT IN FRONT... WE'D BETTER GO ON FOOT...

...LEAVE THE VAN BEHIND...





EPILOGUE
CASEY, ARE WE ALMOST THERE?
JUST ABOUT...
I HOPE WE STOP SOON... LEO'S REALLY HURT... AND RIDING IN THAT TRAILER'S MAKING IT WORSE!
VAN LINES
HERE WE GO-- NEXT EXIT!
U-HAUL
NORTH
NORTHAMPTON NEXT RIGHT
END

ANNOTATIONS

KEVIN EASTMAN

Suddenly—four months after we had left all our fans with that awesome cliffhanger—here comes the follow-up! The huge page count we'd established with all the early issues was a great format, but I think making everyone wait four months between issues was starting to become a problem for everyone—including us.

We were getting busier with the other licensed projects, covers for the role-playing games, colors for the collected editions—and at this time we had signed with a licensing agent, Mark Freedman, and had been making regular trips to the West Coast developing the toys and animated series… something we were pretty sure would never go beyond a development thing, but exciting nonetheless.

I think we'd had a few discussions around this time about not only getting right into issue #11 and wrapping up this arc for the fans, but also that if we switched up working with each other on every single book—and instead brought in other studio guys we wanted to work with—maybe we could increase the regularity of the issues. We'd already been doing this a bunch with the short stories—writing and discussing the stories together—then going off and doing the layouts before handing it off to one of the boys to ink and finish.

I might have pushed harder than Pete did on this idea; I'm not one hundred percent sure. I know we loved working together, but we also found it creatively exciting to work with others—and the workload of running a full studio (we were now publishing a bunch of other titles as well) was creating a constant "Not enough hours in a week" structure and overall drawing time was drifting away.

Little did we know where it was headed.

PETER LAIRD

In his note for Page 25, I suspect that the expression Kevin is thinking of is "Kreegah bundolo!" In my younger years, I enjoyed reading the adventures of Tarzan in both the stories by Edgar Rice Burroughs and the various *Tarzan* comics put out by various companies… and that was one expression that was used a lot… and loosely translated meant "Beware, I kill!"

One other thing about that page—I remember a bit of back and forth on the drawing of Casey's face. I think Kevin inked the first version of it, and I thought it looked wrong, so I drew my own version and pasted it over the one Kevin had drawn. He followed that by drawing another version, and pasting it over mine. It's just one of the examples of how little we were communicating about this stuff by that time, sadly.

I cannot look at the last page in this issue—the "Epilogue" page—and not chuckle. I am SURE this was something Kevin threw in there. People have often asked "What the hell is a frog doing sitting on the side of a highway, in the snow, in December?" I have no answer, other than that it COULD be the rarely glimpsed "tundra frog." (And just so you know, we were calling it that BEFORE Kevin started Tundra Publishing.)

The cover for this issue was fun for me, and I experimented with it a little. To make the foreground action separate more from the background, I did that in color, and all the background stuff in grey wash. I like the way it came out.

Also in this issue, we bring Shredder back. In truth, though many TMNT fans who became fans via the first animated series see the Shredder as a REALLY important part of an ongoing, long-running battle with the Turtles, I don't think Kevin or I ever did. Yes, he was an important part of their history, and they probably would not have come into existence without his involvement in their world (or more accurately Splinter's world)… but that's about it. Other than bringing the Shredder back for "Return to New York" (and the few issues preceding that set that arc up), I never missed him in any of the other TMNT books I worked on.

ANNOTATIONS

ANNOTATIONS

Page 1: Considering the cliffhanger we left the fans off with the last issue, THIS is the way to start an issue—right to the meat of the matter! Christmas Eve, everyone is caught off guard; Leo is badly hurt and announces, "Shredder is back..."

Pages 2–3: This was kicking, and the first time I had tried this kind of layout for a page. Multiple panels capturing the same intense moment for multiple characters! I liked it!

Page 3 (and the next several beyond): I know I have said it a few times in my annotations throughout, but I loved working out the action stuff and it was more exciting the more I tried to amp up the emotion, with the action, and keep the story moving at the same time. I also keep saying "Me, Me, Me" a lot when I explain what I'm doing here with the layouts, but Pete and I talked out the story first, and I just tried hard to fit it all in. Just want to make sure I give credit where credit is due—it was a team effort.

Page 12: I loved the amount of Kirby splash pages and heavy use of Frank Miller—style fighting panels here. I think I had all my Daredevil copies and issues of Ronin around for these parts. And I have to say, here's one of my favorite all-time TMNT lines, "Mr. Foot, meet Mr. Fist!"

Page 17: I also really liked the family/team tactics going on with everyone in this issue, like it was second nature. All their training had led them here since issue #1, and like after The Beatles came back from Hamburg, they were now tighter, faster, and better fighters.

April had also been fully adopted into the family now, and they all were very aware and very concerned about keeping her safe. An important lesson to learn at this stage of their growth as "people" and warriors, and one that would be cemented in the next issue—after a bunch of group fractures and individual missteps first, of course.

Page 19: This leads into pages 20, 21, and 22 (a three-page pull out spread when it was originally published!), and is also one of my all-time favorite TMNT sequences! Not only did we effectively work up to a very intense moment for all the guys and April—we bring the Shredder back with an entrance a true bad guy deserves—but two pages later we bring Casey Jones back… for good. Talk about a perfect story storm!

Page 23: I think what I like about this page (as well as 24 and 25 that follow) is that it was the best and coolest way to bring Casey back. It was also used almost moment-to-moment in the first live-action movie. Actually, the whole sequence that began with the Leo one-shot, up through here and most of book 11, was used in the film. Different Turtles in different roles, but many of the beats are the same. Very cool.

Fun factoid: When Casey said he used to be a bouncer at "Torchy's" I'm pretty sure that was the name of the bar in the Streets of Fire *movie, which I always thought was pretty good. Check out Willem Dafoe in one of his first film roles.*

Page 25: I'm thinking "Goongala! Goongala!" was taken straight out of a Tarzan movie—something only a TV-watching freak like Casey would know.

Page 29: Now this is a classic moment! You have a martial artist as skilled as the Shredder going up against Casey Jones. Street smarts against an ancient art. You'd think it would be pretty one-sided, which is where the baseball bats come in handy. Casey sticks them on Shredder's blades and takes him out! Awesome!

Page 33: With the battle raging, and every battle angle fully explored, it was time to get them out and to safety.

EASTMAN AND LAIRD'S TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

BOOK 11
$1.50
$2.25 IN CANADA
JUNE 1987

#11

THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP

NO...

...GO... ...AWAY!...

KA THUD

THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP

STOP!

THUD

CHUDD

WHUMP

CRACK

TRUE STORIES

FEATURING BIRD · LAVIGNE

AHHH!

BOMP!

OOFFF!

DAMN IT!

...OH...

...NO...

CCHUDD

BRACKK

BAMF

CCRAACKK

THUD

BASH

REETT

RRIPP

CHAKK

RIPP

...FO...

THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP

RRAKK

YAAAA!

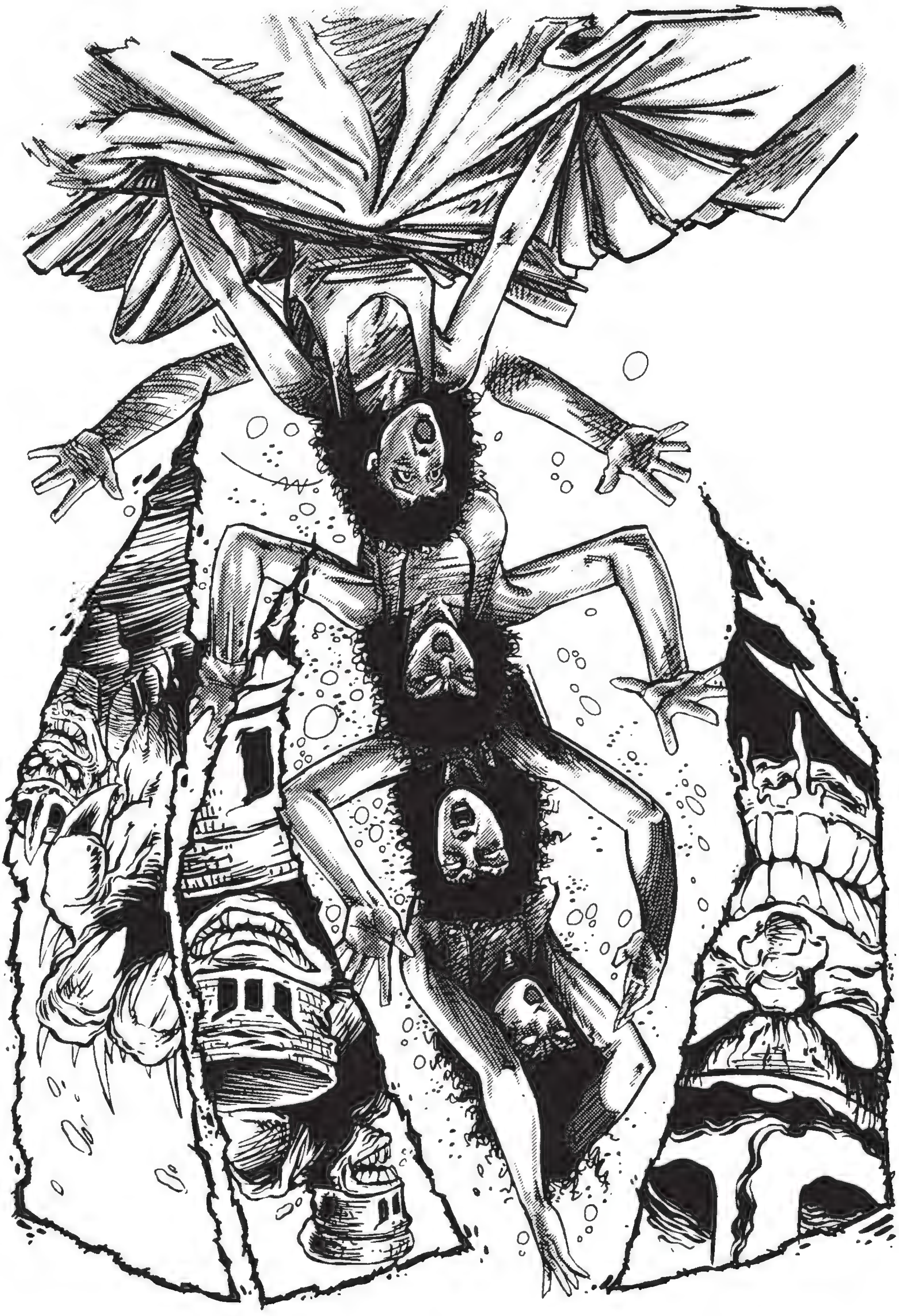
... THE FOOT...

...WITH FOOT COME...

BAM BAM BAM BAM

...SHREDDER!!!

AHHAH
HAH
HAH
HAH



UNNHHHH...

OH GOD!

... GO AWAY...

... GO AWAY...

... GO AWAY...

... GOT TO GET UP...

BRRRRR... COLD.

...OUCH...

...OW...

BUMP

CLICK

FRICK'N LIGHT!

BOMP

Jan. 15, 1987

Yes, its almost Three A.M. again... My Night Mare alarm went off Big time tonight. It's been over two weeks now, with no relief... I was hoping to shake them before this...

I think -- The last time I closed my eyes and actually slept (and I believe exhaustion had a hand in that) was on the trip here...

Even then my awakening was a shock...

PSSST! WAKE-UP!

AAAHHH..

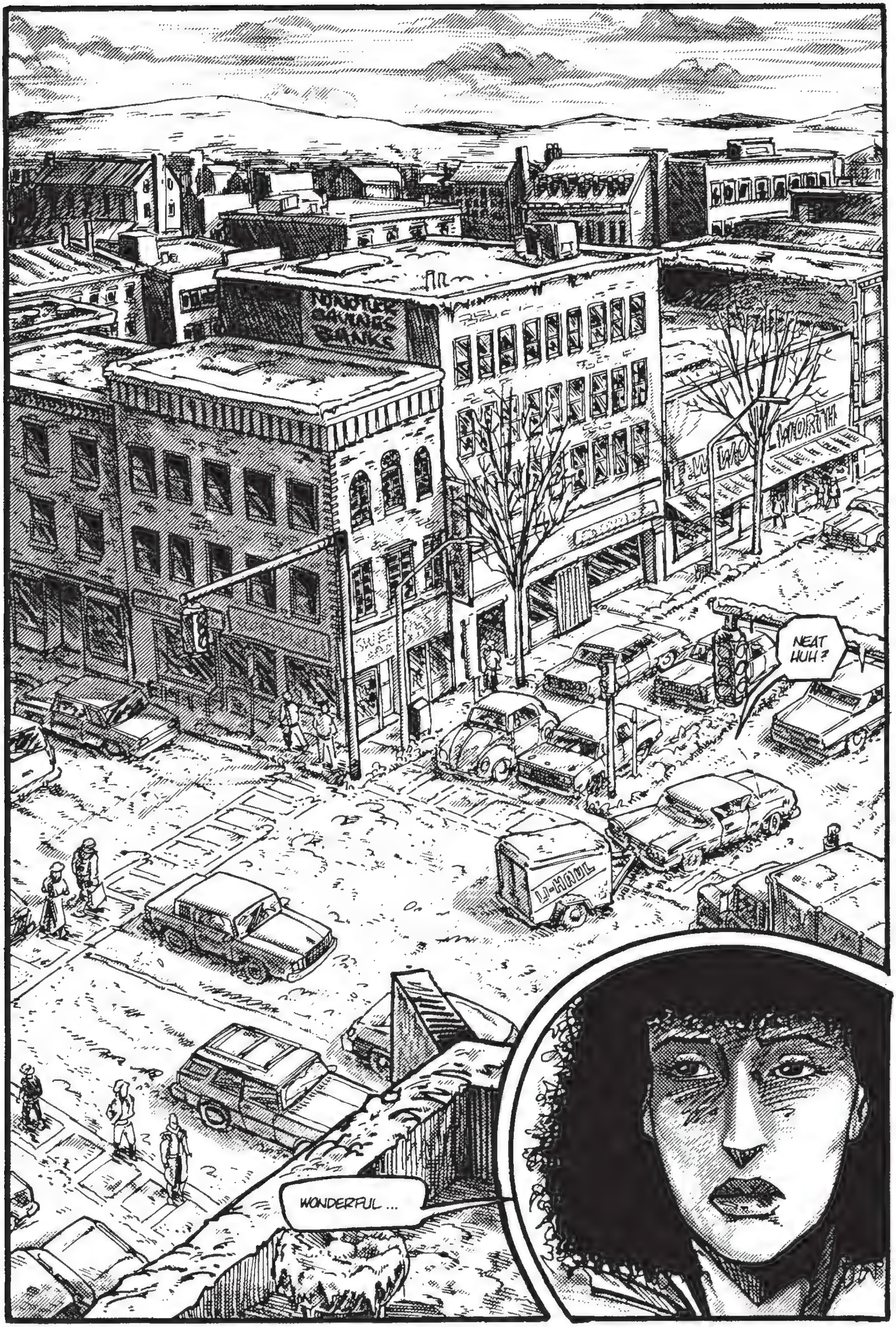
WHOA!-- TAKE IT EASY, APRIL, IT'S JUST ME...

BOMP

SORRY... AH... CASEY... YOU SPOOKED ME, THAT'S ALL...

NO PROB!

WE'RE STILL ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES FROM GRAM'S, BUT I WOKE YOU TO SEE O'L DOWNTOWN NORTHAMPTON!


NJNJ'S SAVINGS BANKS
WOOLWORTH
NEAT HUH?
WONDERFUL...

Considering my state of mind, my reaction was a few notches below "I couldn't care less." I guess I should've looked around a little; I hear that Northampton's nice... at least it might have afforded some kind of comfort for my next sight...

From the road, Casey's late grandmother's house looked like a classic old New England farm house -- big old barn, family sized house, sheds, trees and rolling hills; you know, postcard material. That was from the road...

OH YEAH -- JUST LIKE I REMEMBERED!

ISN'T THIS PLACE GREAT?!

WE'RE GOING TO NEED A FIRE TO KEEP WARM...

...I'LL HELP YOU AFTER WE GET LEO INTO THE... AH... HOUSE...

YAWN!...

ZZZZZZZZZZ

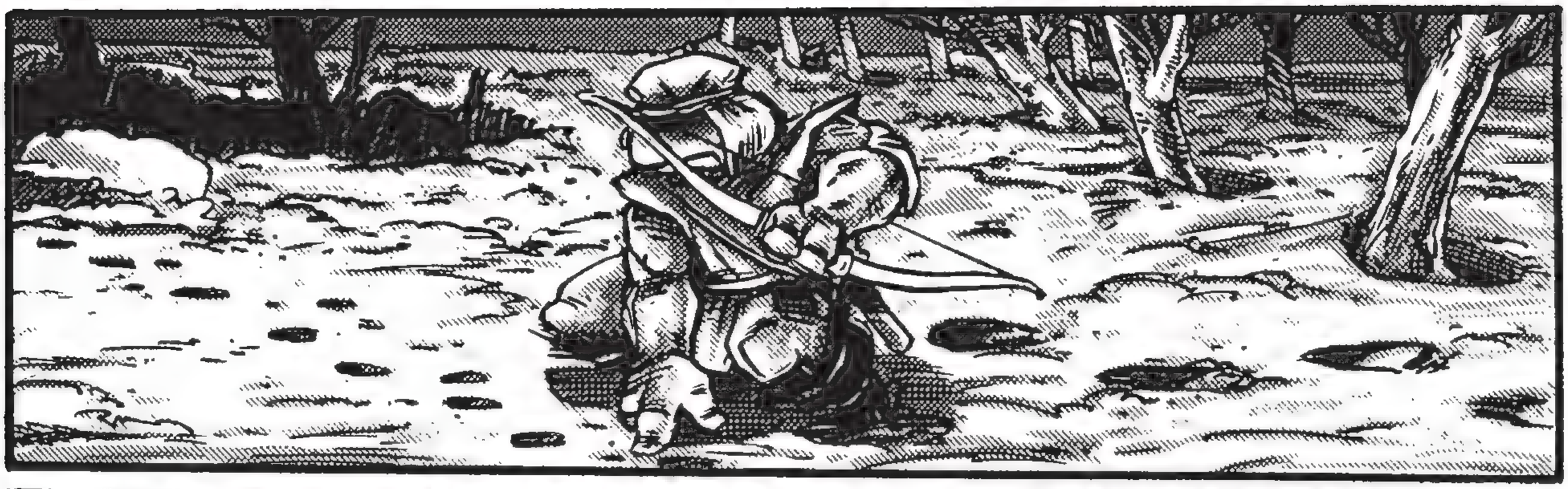
Jan 25, 1987

Winter remains with us... snowed two days straight... Clear today. Leonardo's still pretty out of it The battle tore him up Terribly in both body and mind. Physically he has healed incredibly well, but mentally... I'm afraid he's a lot of catching up to do.

He's always put himself in front of The rest of the guys; taking charge, bearing the extra weight, playing The Big Brother... When someone like That feels they've failed, They fall Hard!

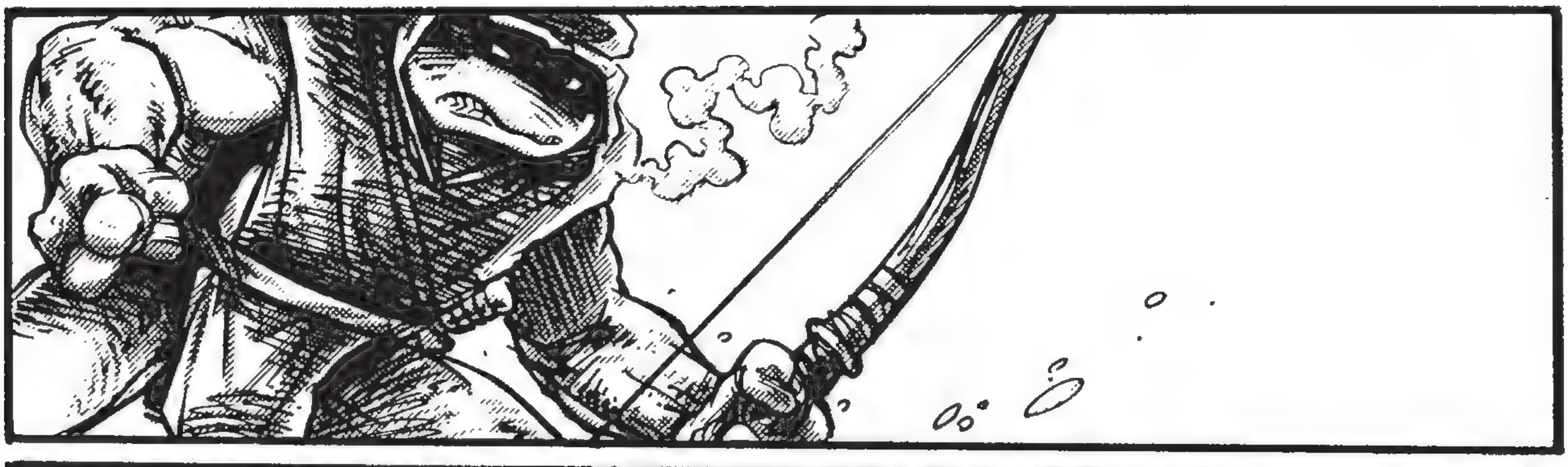
He's recently developed an intense obsession with the surrounding forests and spends all of his time there...

I hope he finds what he's looking for and comes out of this depression soon... We all need him back.



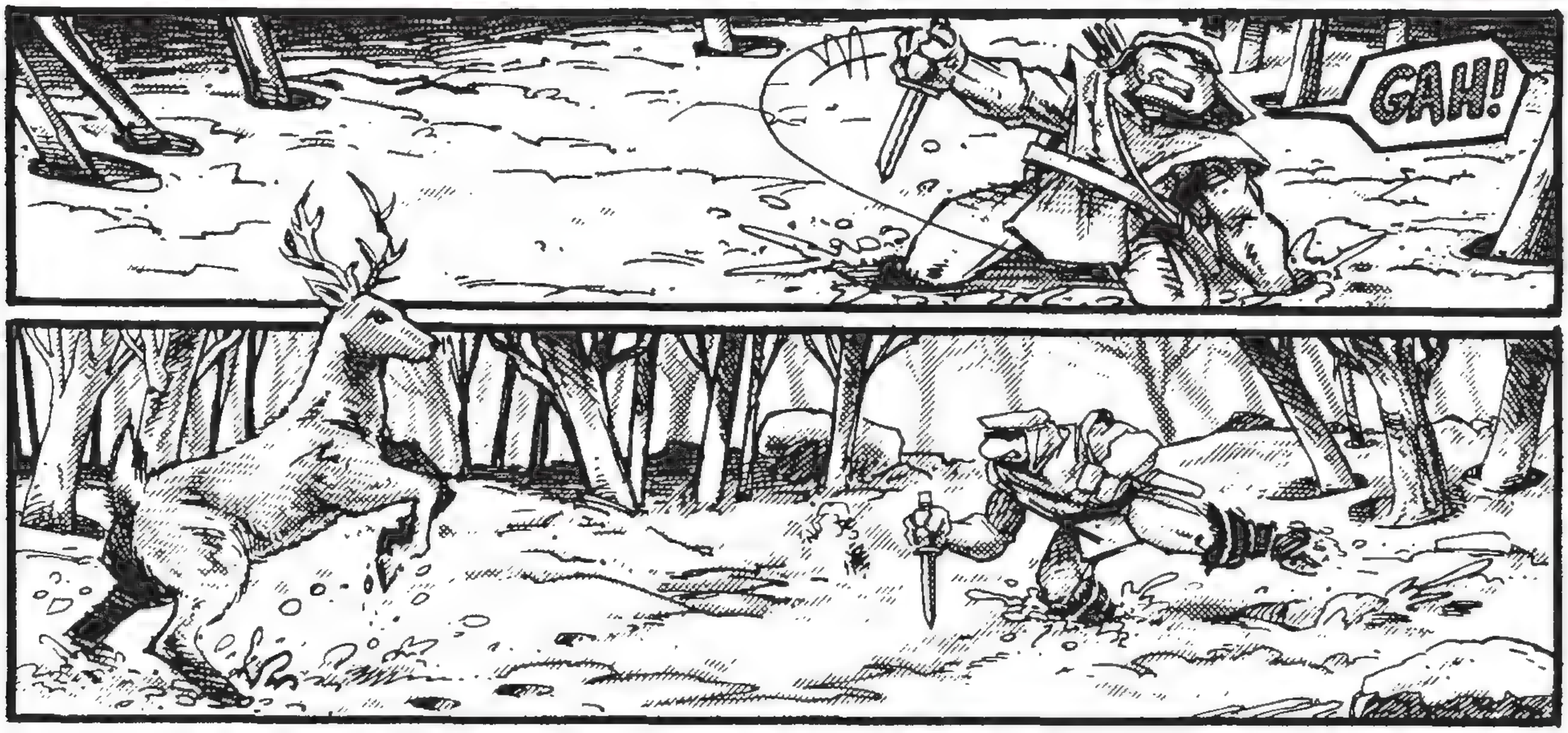
CHIK

TOK



KLOP

SNORT


GAH!

FOOMP

I guess I could never know for sure how he feels inside

But I do know what losing your home -- and everything that you own -- feels like. Those things that you felt gave you a sense of being and strength in this world.

Belongings that touched memory chords of loved ones... Father..

I know he's hurting.

Feb. 10, 1987

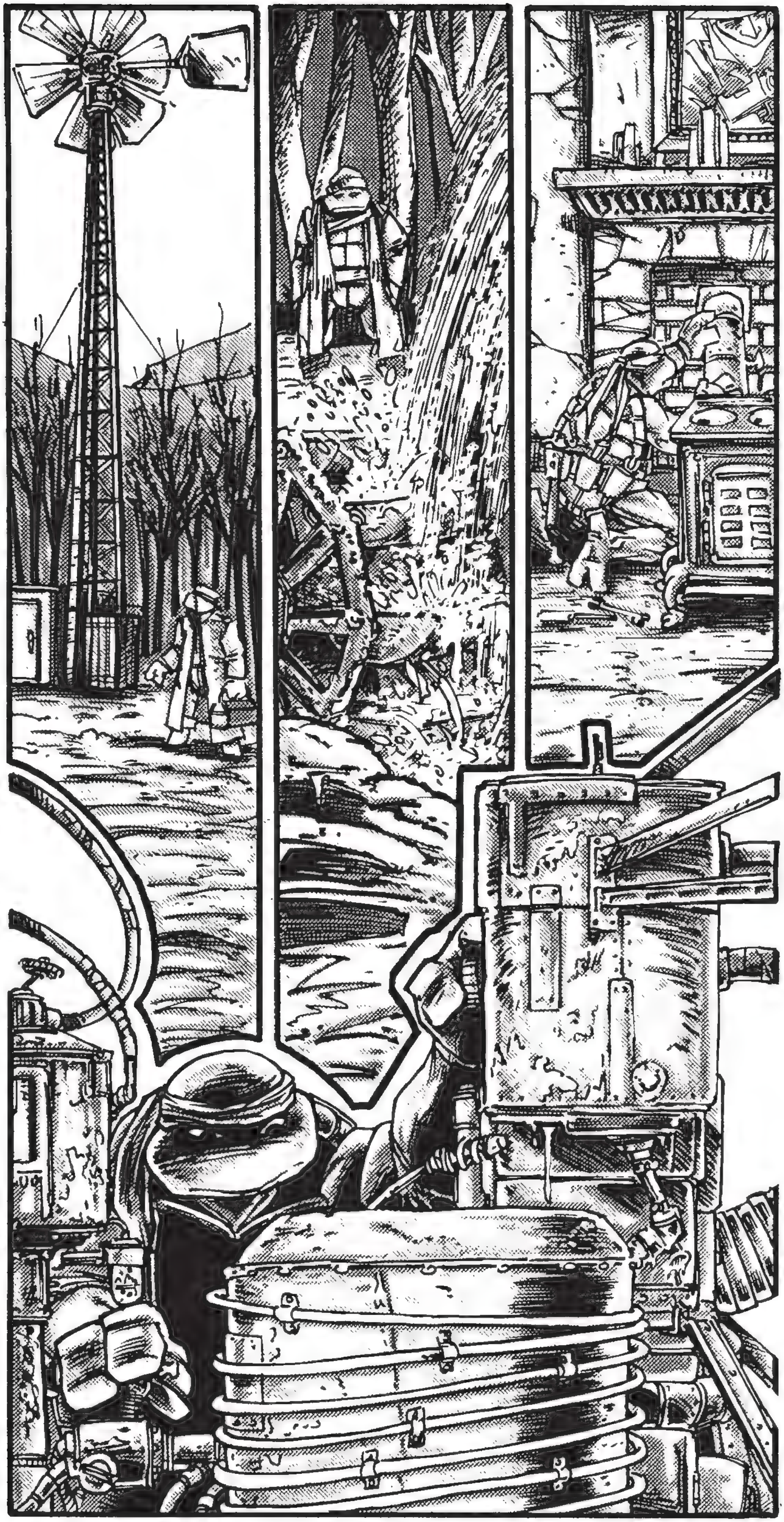
Everything is so strange... I feel like I've never looked at myself or the guys before: we're all so different now. I try to identify the people I used to know with those that surround me now... and it's hard.

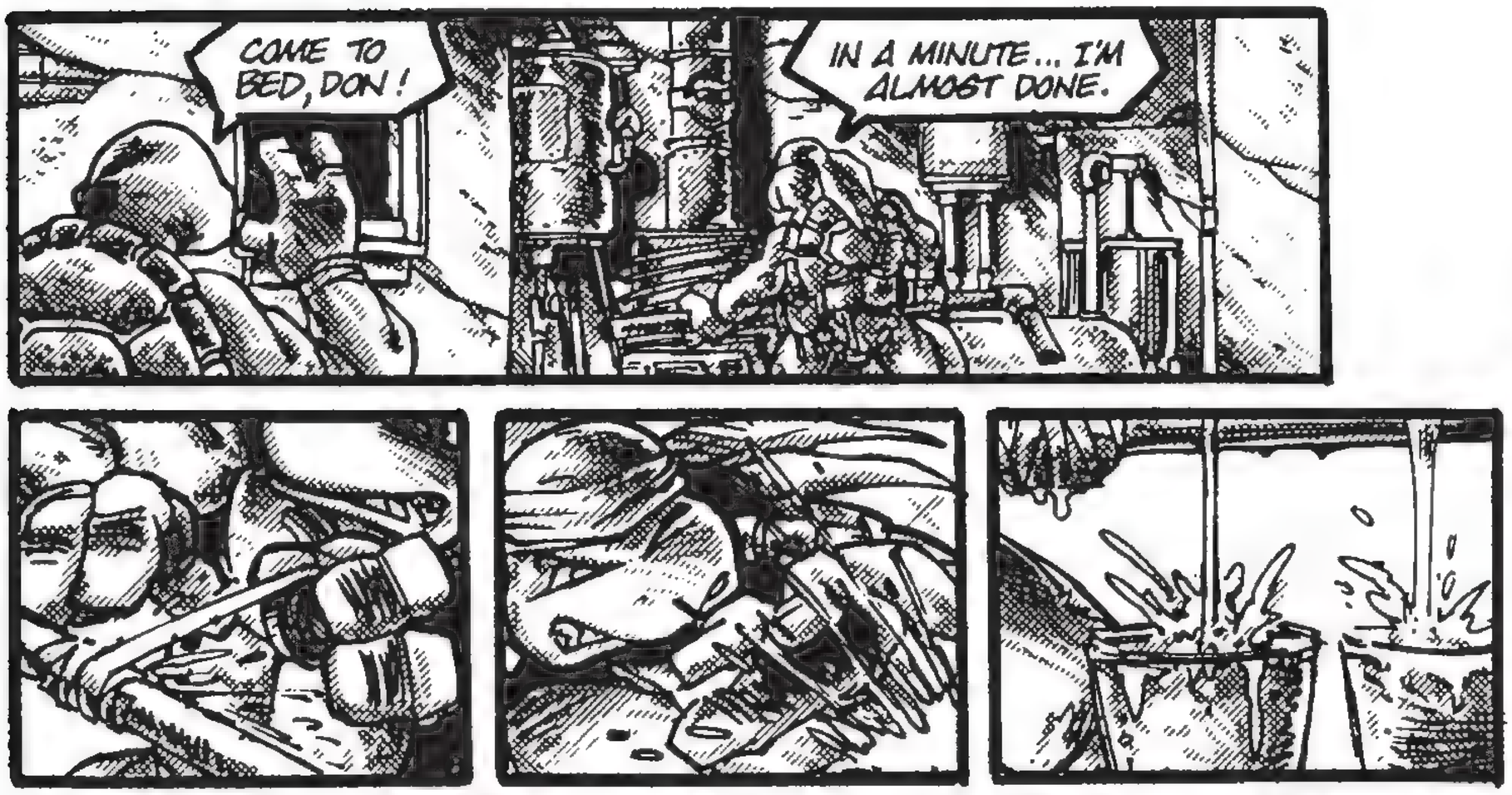
Don isn't doing too badly, although he does work obsessively at the huge amount of repairs that need to be done here. The place has been vacant since Casey's Grandmother left four years ago, it was pretty run down then.

Besides a million little things, Don's rebuilt the windmill to pump water, devised a water wheel that creates enough current for lights and the 'fridge, and also installed a wood stove for better heating, all around.

His most recent undertaking will -- if it works -- satisfy a craving we've all had lately...

... Hot running water!





Feb. 15, 1987

Success! Showertime! Everyone's going nuts!

Feb 17, 1987

Feeling strangely depressed today... I guess I expected Don to rest a bit after the last hard-won victory... No such luck.

I heard him rummaging around in the attic early this morning... who knows what he's working on now.

Feb. 17, 1987

Don's writing too! He must have found an old typewriter in the attic yesterday.

I awoke to the tapping of busy keys around seven A.M. and he's been at it ever since!

I wonder what he's writing about... is it a journal, like mine? I'd love to know...

GO SPUDS GO!
FRENCH ICE
BATMAN

Feb 26,1987

Michaelangelo worries me the most.

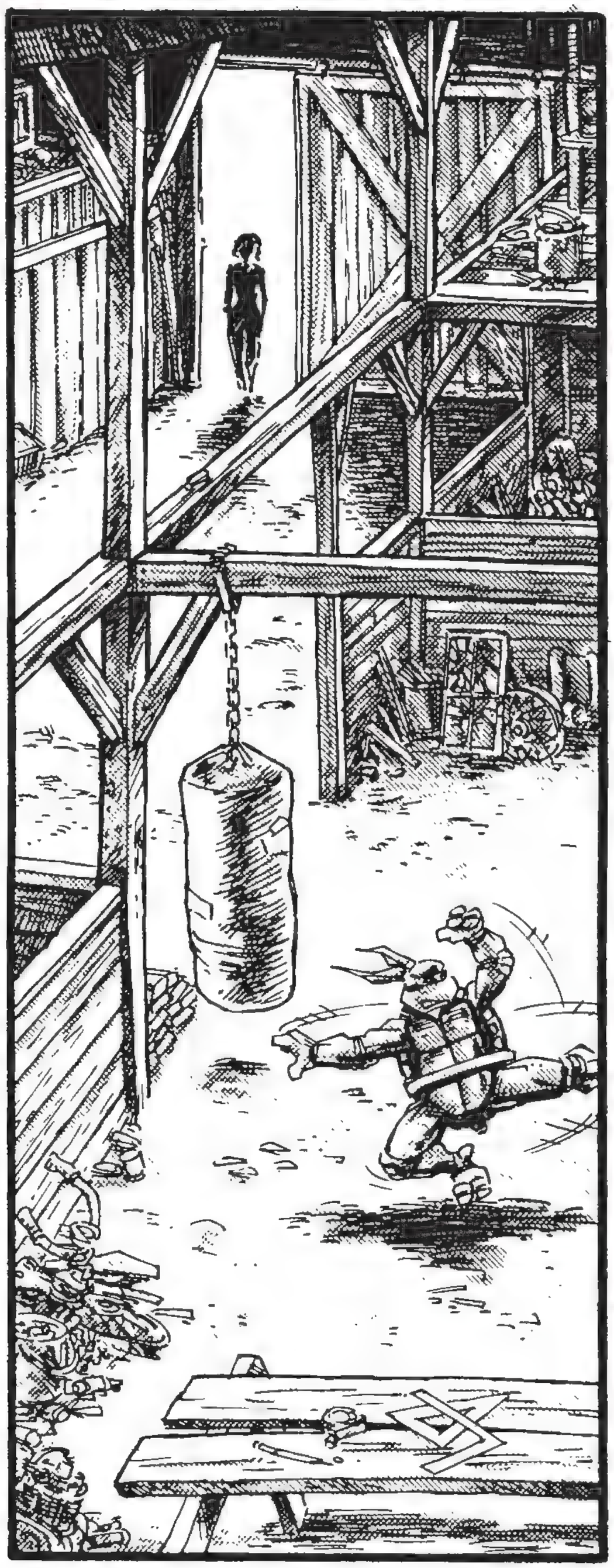
Mike, who could find a joke in just about any situation. doesn't laugh much anymore.

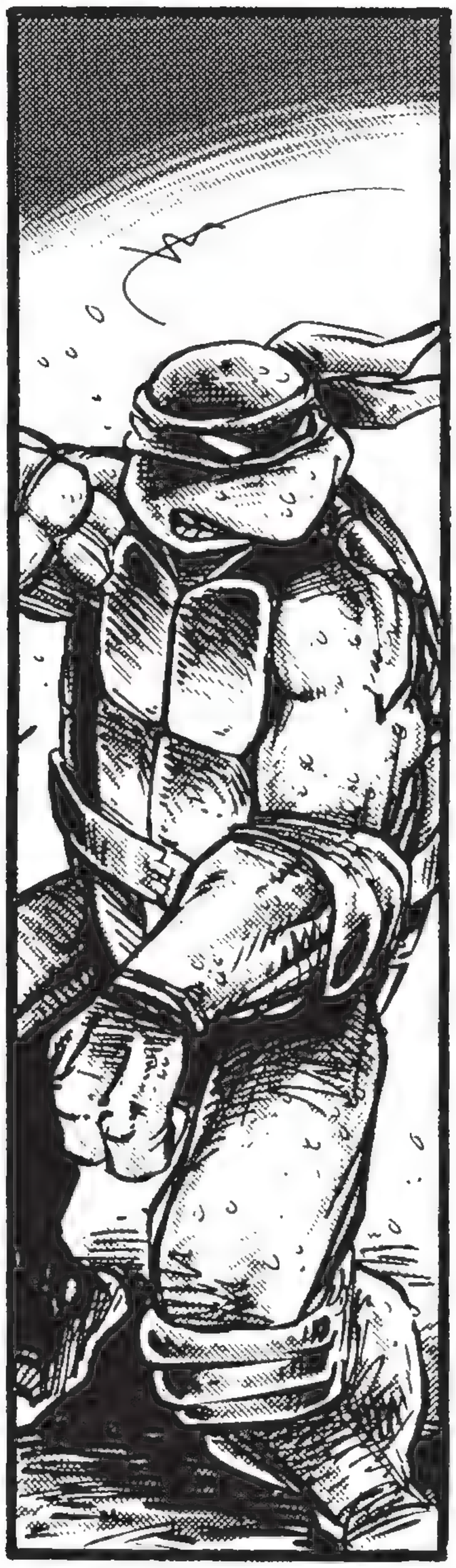
Except for some half hearted goofing around with Casey and Raph, he's been almost painfully solitary lately. its so unlike him. But then all of us seem to have a need to be alone these days.

Has what's happened made us unable to be close? I don't know...

Mike's chosen a back section of the barn for his sanction... cleared abt of junk out and created a little work-out space.

The other day I happened in on one of his sessions. He was already over the edge.





PHOMP

BEAP

SNAP

CHUDD

WAHOMPP!

HAH!

BASH

GROAN...

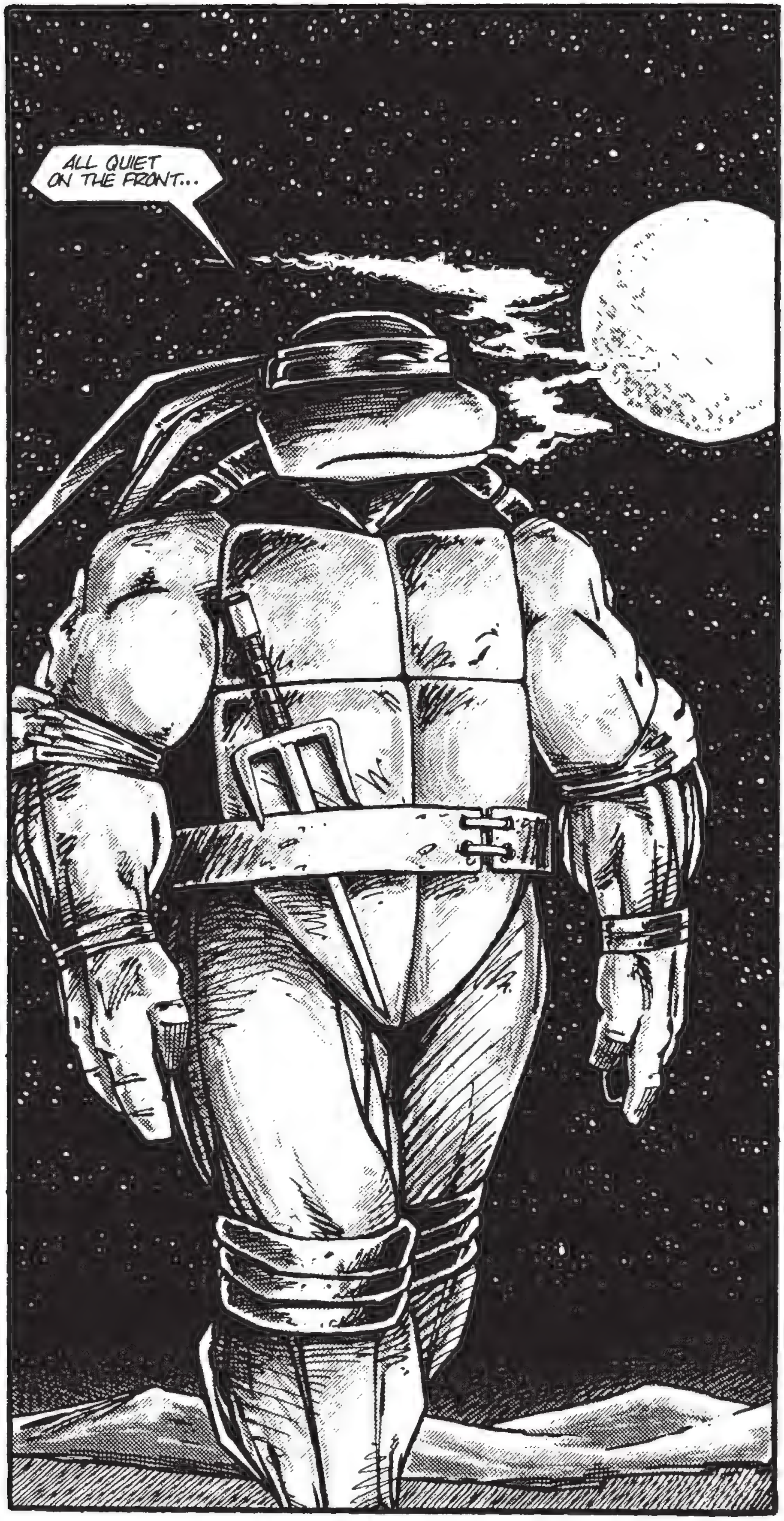
We all feel so much pain and confusion -- Each of us keeping his personal torment bottled up inside... Each seeking relief in his own way.

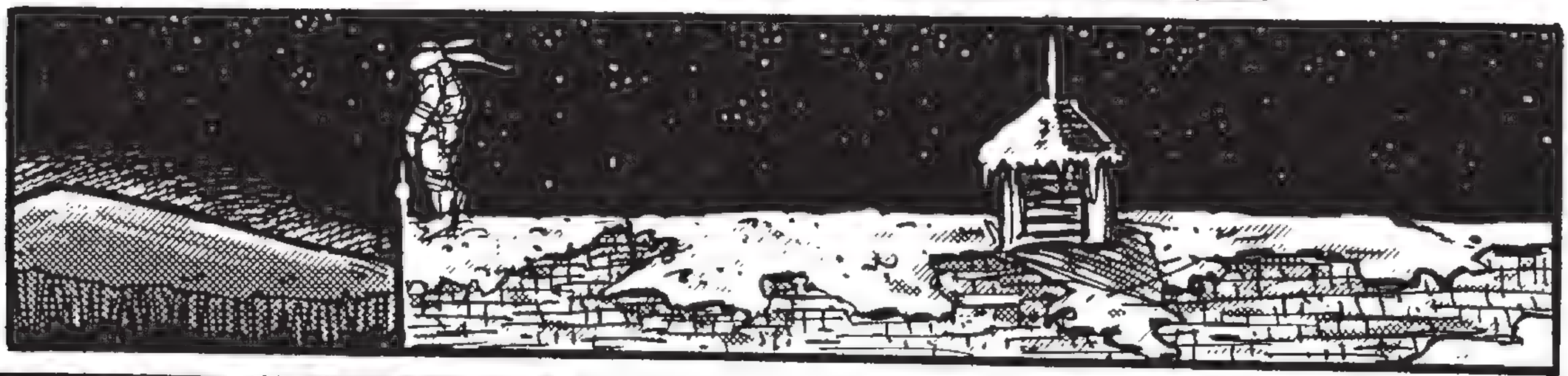
The cure hangs plainly, clearly in front of our faces, but who will be the first to reach out? We Need Each Other!

March 2, 1997

Raphael scares me The rest of the guys I can feel for, worry for but not Raph

Raph runs Hot and Cold very unbalanced, unpredictable. I keep my distance. Lately I've noticed he doesn't sleep much. He's always the first up and the last to bed. I think I've heard him leaving the house late at night, too. I wonder what he's doing... standing guard?





...BACK, TOO.

March 10, 1987

Ive known some odd characters in my time. living in Brooklyn most of my life. But the likes of Casey Beenud Jones is beyond compare.

I believe that in Casey's mind there's a petulant, mischievious ten year old waging constant war with a somewhat mature. Bright young man.. unfortunately the ten year old wins far too often.

Casey spends all of his time with Raphael. fighting. or "doin' projects. doin' projects!" as they say -- usually more damage.

What next?

PUKE BRAIN

CLAYHEAD

DUCK FART

O.K. TURN IT OVER.

YAWN...

YUP.

GACK FACE.

THIS PIECE A JUNK WILL NEVER START!

RRRRRR SPUTTER COUGH! BANG! RRRRRR

VERROOOOMMMM

VROOMM ROOMM

SOUNDS GOOD!

SLAM

O.K, O.K, EASE OFF, THIS THING'S ANCIENT! CHECK THE HAND BRAKE SO IT WON'T ROLL...
...EASE OFF ALREADY!

RRROOOOOOOOOOMMMMMM!

DON'T WORRY! YAWN

CLACK

UT-OH...

OOP!

IT'S IN GEAR!!

RRRR CLINK

COUGH SPUTTER RRREEEETTT

EASE DOWN, DUDE! FOOT OFF GAS PEDAL!!

BASH

THE THROTTLE'S STUCK!!-- WIDE OPEN!

VERROOOMMM

USE THE BRAKE-- THE BRAKE!!

GAAHH!

NO CONTROL!--

YOW!

SCRAPE

JEEP

--IT'S THE SNOW--

--NO TRACTION!

YAAAA

CRUNCH

I HATED THAT JEEP ANYWAY.

HAVE THEY SEEN THE WIND-MILL YET?

COULDN'T MISS IT.

MAD?

SAW'EM CARRYING GUNS AND A NOOSE! YUK, YUK!

EAT WORMS AND DIE!

KKRRAHKKK

OH, NO... PLEASE...
...DON'T...

--BREAK!

SHHAAAKK

EEEEEE--

PLOUCHE

APRIL?

APRIL!!

COUGH GLUB

HELPPP!

APRIL!!

LEO..

HANG ON APRIL!

...HURRY.. ...COLD!

I'M COMING... JUST HANG...ON!

LEO...

I'M COMING, I'M COMING!

GOT YOU...

UNFF--! YOU'RE SAFE... I HAVE YOU!

COUGH COUGH!

THANK YOU.

ASHHH!

LATER...

SHE'LL BE FINE, BUT WE MUST LET HER REST.

AS FOR YOU, MY SONS, ENOUGH TIME HAS PASSED... YOUR SPIRITS HAVE DRIFTED FAR TOO LONG. COME, WE HAVE MUCH TO DO.

April 30th!

ROBERT GRAY LIVE

PEELE STREET.

YOU MUST WORK HARDER!

THIS WINTER HAS SEEN THE DIFFUSION OF YOUR ENERGIES...

WITH THE SPRING, YOU MUST REBUILD YOUR GROUP SPIRIT...

FOR NOW, SET ASIDE INDIVIDUAL PURSUITS... YOUR HEALING REQUIRES COLLECTIVE FOCUS!

May 1, 1997

I can't believe it's been over a month since I fell through the ice... and even longer since Ive picked up this journal. I almost didn't this time, either. it all seems to mean so little now. I started this book to rebuild all I had lost in the fire.

I guess after my mid-winter swim (HA, HA) I realized what little importance my life long accumulation of possessions had. I thought it was all I had in this world.

Not true.

Ive got me, and Ive got memories.

I also have friends, real friends that I care for and that care for me. I'll always be there for them and they for me; we have each other, we are a family... one.

This will probably be my last entry. I guess I just wanted some kind of final word ...sort of wrap up all I had written so far.

Life is Good...
and Life Goes on.

HO NEE CHEE CHEE HO HO HO HA, HA, HA, HA, HA, HA, HA

YOU'VE DONE WELL, MY SONS... YOUR SPIRIT GLOWS BRIGHT AND PURE THIS NIGHT. ALTHOUGH I SENSE AN ALMOST PEACEFUL NATURE THROUGHOUT... SOMETHING STILL LINGERS.

YES, WE WERE ATTACKED BY OUR PAST, LEONARDO NEARLY KILLED... BUT WE ALL FEEL THE REAL COST WAS TO APRIL, A BURDEN WE SHALL ALWAYS BEAR.

YET, OUR EXPERIENCE TEACHES US, IN ALL THE UNIVERSE CHANGE IS THE ONLY CONSTANT.

THUS, THE WAY OF HARMONY IS TO ACCEPT CHANGE. WE MAKE OUR CHOICES IN LIFE-- AND OUR KARMA IS TO ACCEPT THE CHANGES THOSE CHOICES BRING.

JUST AS APRIL CHOSE TO TAKE US ALL INTO HER LIFE, SHE KNEW THERE WOULD BE CHANGES...

...I BELIEVE THAT APRIL HAS GAINED MORE BY HER CHOICE THAN SHE HAS LOST... AND I BELIEVE THAT SHE KNOWS THIS.

LIFE IS GOOD... AND LIFE GOES ON.

KNOK KNOK!
CREEEEKK!

GOOD MORNING!

SURPRISE!

A BIT O'SUN, MILADY?

BREAKFAST IS SERVED, MADAMOISELLE!

AW, GUYS..!

FINI

ANNOTATIONS

KEVIN EASTMAN

I was looking back over the notes I made about this issue, issue #11, in the *Artobiography* book I did a number of years back and one of the points I made then jumped back out at me—"The end of the Eastman and Laird Golden Age…" I go on to add, "The first and most important part of a spectacular journey was over—made special by a great partner. Thanks, Pete."

All true, and what a journey it was. I really don't think either of us realized it would be the last time we would work on TMNT like this—fully connected—still a single mind working the story. Even with the "Return to New York" or issue #50 that kicked off the "City at War" run that came much later, it was different. Not in a bad way, but not in a good way either. It just wasn't the same anymore. And it's bittersweet, looking back.

The specific inspirations for many parts of this story are clear to me, but I wonder how clearly they were picked up on by others at the time. "True Stories," the title of one of the Talking Heads' best albums, was where I borrowed the title. The dream sequence is right out of a Miller *Daredevil* issue. And diary/cursive writing was strongly inspired by the Jon Muth *Moonshadow* comic series. All this rolled into Peter and me bringing our characters home to the town we lived in at the time, Northampton, Massachusetts.

If I recall correctly, I think we both felt that if we told this part of the story from April's point of view, in this issue, she would bring a better overall perspective of the entire fractured group that no one else could. And injecting her own personal traumas and healing, as part of the process, would give us all an entry point as we watch her become an important part of the group. Plus, it was a chance to try another interesting storytelling technique I/we had never tried before.

Looking back, I think we pulled it off. And I think it held up better over time than either of us thought it would. It is a very good issue. It's mature and, like #10 and *Leonardo* before it, became a very big/important part of the structure in the first live-action film.

PETER LAIRD

This was an interesting book, because it really wasn't like the typical TMNT comic (if there is such a thing). It's a lot more introspective and quiet than most of them, and I also wonder now if the storyline we had going at that time somehow mirrored how our partnership was starting to fray. It would be nice to think that by the end of working on this issue, we'd come back together like the Turtles, Splinter, and April had on that last page… unfortunately, that was not the case.

With the burgeoning success and accompanying stresses of the TMNT licensing program then (in 1987) kicking into high gear, Kevin and I had gotten kind of sick of working with each other. It had become very difficult to produce an issue of the TMNT comic book without a lot of unpleasantness and disagreements. It got to the point where we both realized that something had to change.

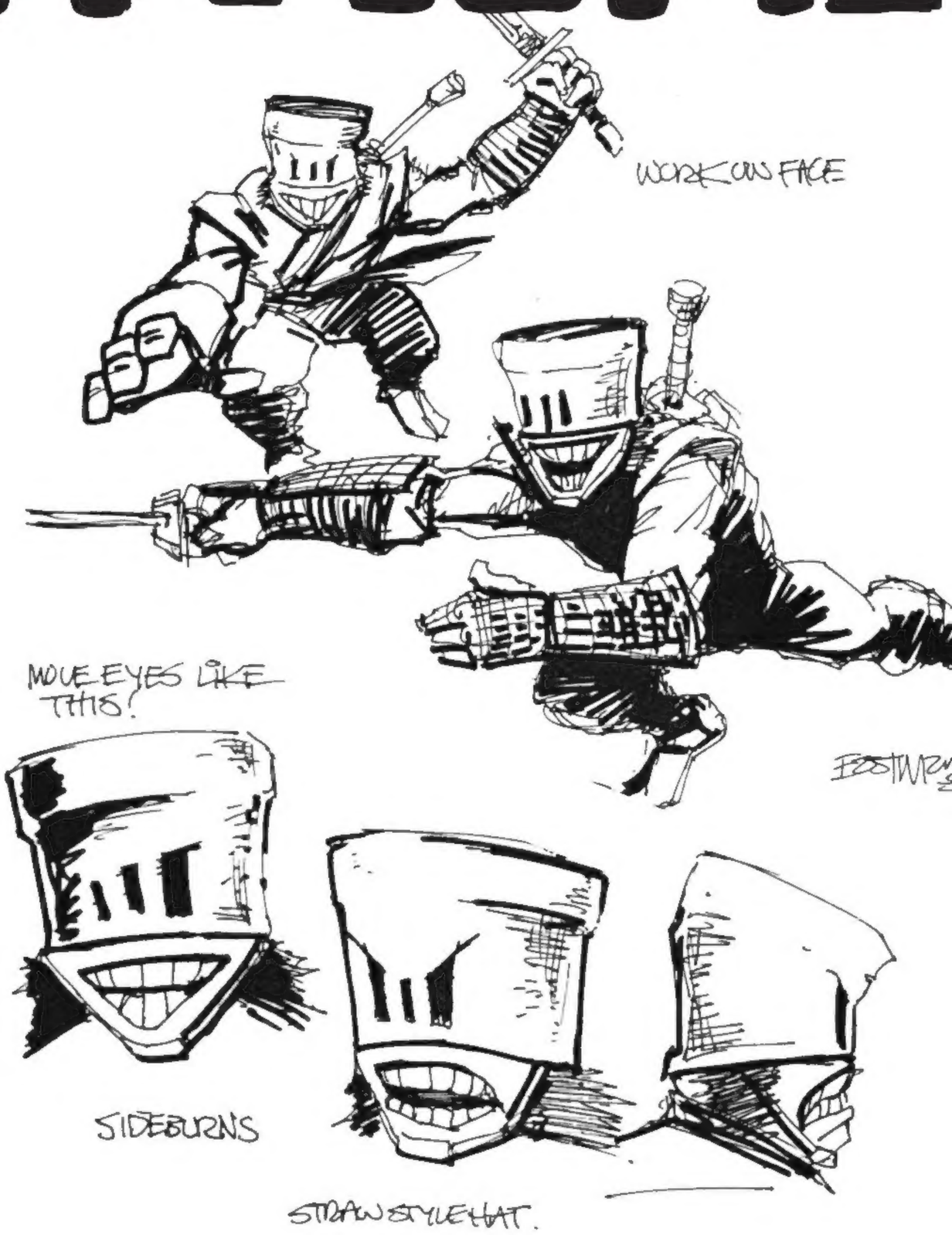
I remember we had a short meeting in Pulaski Park in downtown Northampton, wherein we decided that we should take a break from each other, and alternate issues of the comic—I'd do one, he'd do the next, and so on. It fell to me to produce the next issue—I can't remember exactly how we came to that conclusion... perhaps I already had a story, perhaps Kevin was too busy with something else. I don't know.

Of course, I should also mention here that whatever problems we were having, we did remain partners for another ten years or so. And when we got back to working together on "Return to New York" and then "City at War" some years after this issue, it felt like some of the old spark came back. Not all of it, but quite a bit.

It is cool knowing that Steve Barron used that scene with Raphael and Casey working on the old truck when he directed the first live action TMNT movie. And I have to say that that whole scene is all Kevin, right down to the "Eat worms and die!" line it ends on.

One more thing—I think that those first six pages with April's nightmare about the Shredder and the Foot are some of the coolest that Kevin's ever come up with. Very inventive and memorable… and creepy!

ANNOTATIONS



Page 1: Although I love the layout of this page I still cringe at how bad the drawing of April was! I don't think either of us had quite gotten "drawing women" down very well yet (and it still gives me trouble).

Pages 2–3: These were fun—really building the fear factor here—and I LOVED the little Foot Demons. I wish we used them more!

Pages 4–5: YEAH, BABY! That is what I'm talking about! I love this two-page spread. It's a total Kirby-inspired 3D explosion of action. This is what makes drawing comics fun for me! I still hate the April drawing here as well, though…

Page 8: I like this transition a lot. The nightmare really steps up the personal trauma April was dealing with since the attack on the Second Time Around Shop, and was a great way to ease into the "Writing in the Diary" device that would carry the issue. Steve Lavigne did an awesome job on the lettering for that.

Page 10: This is a perfect shot of the main intersection of the groovy little town of Northampton, Massachusetts. In fact, if we had panned a little more to the left, we could have shown the actual building-front where I first visited Peter in his little studio apartment six years earlier.

Page 13: I think April's writing helped the story flow because we had A LOT of story we needed to tell, but we needed to tell it from several different characters' points of view. That meant jumping around to different story beats quickly, and keeping the pace moving steadily.

Page 17: I feel like all the character-building moments worked incredibly well here, moreso than even the individual one-shot issues did. Probably because of the emotion each one was processing. And we also dug a little deeper into them, showing some specific character interests or a side of their personalities we had never shown before.

Page 20: Don's success with the hot water heater was wonderful for the group, but his waste can full of attempts at getting his thoughts down on paper revealed feelings of personal failure.

Page 23: Happy-go-lucky Michelangelo's training session that turns into a violent rage/exorcism was perfect. Intense, but it worked well and I think the fans really felt it, too.

Page 26: Raphael has always been the easiest and the most fun to write. His backflips across the ice-covered barn roof really didn't dig much deeper into his character, as it feels like he would do that kind of thing anyway. But it was a good transition over to Casey's story, where we have them both act like the 10-year-old boys they both really wanted to be.

ANNOTATIONS

That was the "different" side of Raph that I think was really cool—the kid inside—showing he actually had a good sense of humor.

I just wanted to mention the Jeep they are working on here. My Grandfather Eastman used to have one like that. He kept it up at the lake in Maine that we would go to all the time in the summer when I was a kid. It was the first car I ever drove. So it was cool to put that in the story. Personal touches like that were such fun to do.

Page 31: I'm not sure exactly why, but I feel like having April in peril, falling through the ice and having Leo save her, accomplished two things. Not only did it establish their bond, but the "entire family" bond as well. It is a misfit family bond they now all shared. And how they all fit together and would be forever looking out for, and involved in, each other's lives. All four Turtles, April, Casey, and Splinter—became part of an awesome adoptive family for each of them.

Page 33: I think I like this full-page splash so much (one I still keep in my personal art collection) because it shows the entire group together as a full-on family for the first time. And it's a perfect transition to the next page where Splinter is training them hard again. He knew they had each processed what they needed to, and now it was time to strengthen the bond and the group.

Page 35: And much like it started the entire story back on page nine, April's final diary entry here is the perfect sum-up. Time has passed, they ARE a family, life is good, and life goes on. I also like the drawing done on April on this page; I think we had gotten better at drawing her by the issue's end. Heh!

Page 36: I still crack up when I see the little song they sing at the top of the page. I know it had a specific meaning/reference to something we all did as a group back then, but for the life of me I can't recall…

Splinter's summary on this page is awesome as well. It mirrors what April wrote, as each group arrived at the same place at the same time with a clearer understanding of themselves, each other, and the entire group.

Page 38: And the perfect page, the perfect end to an awesome journey for both the characters and the creators. There would be many more to come on both sides of the comic pages, in fact they are still going on today—nearly thirty years later… and man, what an amazing journey for all! All those awesome tales—all lived, most loved, and a few forever lost.

But life goes on, and life is good.

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